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Sermon, Addresses and Essays

DELIVERED AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE

One Hundredth Anniversary

OF THE FOUNDATION OF

The First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia

This volume is presented by the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia to its members and friends as a memorial of the one hundredth anniversary of its foundation, and of the meetings held in celebration of the occasion.

PHILADELPHIA

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY

1896

EN

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Sermon, Addresses and Essays

DELIVERED AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE

One Hundredth Anniversary

OF THE FOUNDATION OF

The First Unitarian Church
of Philadelphia

Tuesday, May Twelfth

AND

Wednesday, May Thirteenth

1896

PHILADELPHIA

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PREFATORY NOTE

The valuable essays and addresses contained in this volume were delivered at the meetings held in the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, May twelfth and thirteenth, 1896, in celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the organization of our Society.

It is deeply to be regretted that the list is not quite complete; for there is wanting one of the most remarkable and instructive of the essays, that of Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright on "The Development of Philosophy During the Century." This was given without notes, and the stenographic report proving imperfect, owing to the difficult nature of the subject, it was impossible for the author to reproduce what he had spoken without greater labor than it seemed just to ask him to undertake.

And not even the art preservative of all arts is sufficient to embalm for us, in these pages, the spirit and cheer of the highly interesting occasion. Held, necessarily, a calendar month in advance of the actual date, the heats of summer were avoided, and delightful weather favored our proceedings. At the four sessions our Church was filled,—on the two evenings crowded,—with attentive, serious and happy congregations. The only social feature of the celebration was the pleasant informal luncheon at a neighboring hotel, at which assembled nearly two hundred friends from abroad, with members of our own and the other Unitarian Societies of this city.

The bust of Dr. Priestley, which on the second evening became the property of the Church, through the generosity of a few friends, several of them his descendants, was unveiled by one of the latter and made complete the beautiful monument erected in his honor by the Unitarians of America seven years ago. While preserving the lineaments of the great and good man to whom the foundation of our Society was so largely due, it remains also, the one material memento of our Centennial Festival.

May another century find our beloved Church still young, strong, faithful and useful! In that period how much should the cause of Truth, in all its departments, have advanced!

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Except the Lord build the house
They labor in vain that build it.
Except the Lord keep the city
The watchman waketh but in vain.

Celebration of the

One Hundredth Anniversary

of the Foundation of

The First Unitarian Church

of Philadelphia

Tuesday, May 12th, at 8 P. M.

and

Wednesday, May 13th, at 9.30 A. M., 3 and 8 P. M.

1896

ORDER OF EXERCISES

TUESDAY EVENING AT 8 O'CLOCK

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

ANTHEM—"Te Deum Laudamus"

PSALM AND GLORIA PATRI

(From page 47 of Service Book, read *responsively*
by pastor and people, *standing*)

PRAYER—REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, of Roxbury, Mass.

HYMN 4—"Before Jehovah's Awful Throne"

(Tune "Old Hundred")

ADDRESS - - - - - REV. JOSEPH MAY, Pastor

ANTHEM—"I will Extol Thee"

Kosta

SERMON - - - - - REV. CHARLES CARROLL EVERETT, D. D.

Dean of the Theological School of Harvard University

HYMN 463—"One Holy Church of God Appears"

(Tune "Hummell")

BENEDICTION

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13th

9.30 A. M.—COMMUNION AND MEMORIAL SERVICE

Conducted by REV. JOSEPH MAY, Pastor

ADDRESSES by

REV. ROBERT COLLYER, of New York, and

REV. JAMES DE NORMANDIE, of Roxbury, Mass.

On the life and services of the late Rev. William Henry Furness, D. D., pastor from 1825 to 1875, and afterwards pastor *emeritus*.

10.30 A. M.—ADDRESS OF CONGRATULATION FROM
SISTER CHURCHES.

REV. HOWARD N. BROWN,

Rector of King's Chapel, Boston

ANTHEM—"If with all your Heart"

Mendelssohn

11 A. M. to P. M.—ESSAYS by

REV. W. W. FENN, of Chicago, on

"*Biblical Authority During the Century*"

REV. MERLE ST. CROIX WRIGHT, of New York, on

"*The Development of Philosophy during the Century*"

1 to 3 P. M.—INTERMISSION

Luncheon will be served at the Rittenhouse Hotel to clergymen and friends from abroad at 1.15 P. M.

3 P. M.—ESSAYS by

REV. JOHN W. CHADWICK, of Brooklyn, N. Y., on
“Theology in America during the Century”

REV. SAMUEL M. CROTHERS, of Cambridge, Mass., on
“The Religious Outlook at the Close of the Century”

EVENING SESSION

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

ANTHEM—“Cantate Domino” *Buck*

ADDRESS by DR. JAMES W. HOLLAND

Professor of Chemistry and Dean of Jefferson Medical College

“Joseph Priestley, Philosopher”

To be followed by the unveiling of a bust of Dr. Priestley, the gift of a few friends and members of the Church.

ANTHEM, Duet—“Those who Reign Above” *Donizetti*

ESSAY by JOHN FISKE, LL. D., on

“A Century's Progress in Science”

ANTHEM—“Praise the Lord” *Hauptmann*

BENEDICTION

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

BY THE PASTOR, REV. JOSEPH MAY

Unitarian friends from abroad, fellow-citizens, members of this Society:

On the twelfth of June, 1796 (a date which the circumstances of modern life necessitate our anticipating by a calendar month in the celebration in which we now unite), fourteen persons, mostly *young* men, met in this city and organized themselves as "The First Society of Unitarian Christians in Philadelphia."

There was courage, friends, in those days, in their adopting the title they resolved to assume. Very few, if any, religious societies had, up to that time, formally applied it to themselves. These young men had been distinctly warned against adopting it by others already prominent in the movement of thought in which their convictions were implicating them.

But they were led, in all their initial action, by a brave and wise man; one who had sacrificed greatly to principle and the cause of truth. They must instinctively have felt that to be true they must be *wholly* true and frankly true, and they welcomed—humbly, I dare say, but boldly—the unpopularity, the opposition, the sacrifices they were to endure, as, on the little citadel of faith which they were founding, they hung out their modest banner with its profound and earnest challenge to the deeply-rooted thought of the Christian community amidst which they were to live and serve.

Obloquy, and even persecution, they were to endure. Few, they long remained. But JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, martyr to the cause of religious, and almost more specifically to the cause of political freedom, was their prophet and counsellor, and the lesson he had learned they practised on, with what wisdom time has not refused to witness.

We are here because they were true!

To-night and to-morrow we commemorate, especially, these men. Their honorable names are little more than vocables to us of a century later, but their works do follow them. The tree grew as they faithfully planted it. They lived to nurse it into strength and fruitfulness. We honor their memories. In Heaven they have their reward.

All the little company served loyally and well. I believe that no one of those who first put hand to plow afterwards turned back. Through ill report and good they bore their honorable burthen, testifying to the principles of freedom in religious enquiry, the unlimited goodness of God, the dignity of human nature, the simplicity of the divine personality.

The simple religious services in which they engaged were long conducted by the members of the Society in turn. But three of these I single out and pronounce their names, for they served their fellows in a manner which, in the history of the modern Church, still remains exceptional—perhaps, in its term, unique. John Vaughan, the friend of Franklin, Jefferson and the Adamses; Ralph Eddowes and James Taylor became the lay pastors of the Church, and as such led its members in worship and the other

usual sacraments, preached many original discourses, and the last laid not down his functions until nearly thirty years had passed, and the progress of thought and the growth of the Unitarian communion made it possible to secure as religious head of the Society one trained professionally for the preacher's office.

Meanwhile, not a little had their work prospered. Though the multitude had looked on them askance, had often derided and even affronted them, yet sympathizing souls there were who had gathered to them in numbers sufficient to enable them to prepare for themselves a religious home, and for their worship a temple, fit though small.

In the year 1813, amidst the depressions of an ill-advised and unfortunate war, the little band had erected a church, in which they first met for worship on Sunday, February 14th.

I dare say no one now living remembers that little fane. It was of the octagonal shape seen in some of the chapels of England (particularly, I believe, in Yorkshire), with its pulpit high in air and pews enough to hold some two hundred and fifty persons. No relic of it, that I know of, endures, except the mahogany communion table, which we possess, and its not untuneful bell, which still calls the children to school in the district where it first pealed its modest invitation to the Unitarian Gospel.

But small though it was, and brief its term, that little edifice, my friends, was an historic one. *It was the first house ever erected in this country for the sole worship of the "One God, the 'Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all."*

It was erected, too, as I have shown, by a Society which had been for seventeen years under lay leader-

ship almost exclusively, and which so continued for twelve years more. A layman, Mr. Ralph Eddowes, preached the Sermon of Dedication.

Of the fortunes and the labors of the Society during those twelve years, I can now say nothing. In 1825 occurred the event which perfected their organization as a church by giving them a clerical head, and which, through the providence which so long united him to its successive generations, seems also to unite us with these long-ago times and men.

On Wednesday, January 12, 1825, was ordained to the ministry of religion and installed as pastor of this Church, a young man destined to be its minister in form for a full half-century; in fact, so long as his life should last; that long and gracious life which continued him, a familiar presence within these still recent walls, the dear friend of many of us who gather here to-night. It is the one limitation of our present joy that we cannot welcome him at this festival. But we looked our last upon his venerable form, here before this altar, little more than three short months ago!

I need not—hardly can I name him! I need not invoke his presence; spiritually he is here; here in all our hearts; in our thoughts and loving recollections; here through the unchanging devotion which for seventy years he gave to our Church, in the service of which his manly years began; to which he consecrated the energies of his vigorous, sensitive, brilliant intellect, the warmth of his strong affections, the fruits of his studies and of his searching, courageous, but delicate and reverent thinking; the eloquent, persuasive words of his firm and never-fettered, but kind and honey-sweet lips!

WILLIAM HENRY FURNESS ! Time would quickly fail me if I presumed now fittingly to speak of him. But his career, his character, his services to religion, to freedom of thought, to criticism, have been rehearsed by many in these weeks since his honored life reached its earthly term, and ended so quietly. Mingled strength and sweetness were his traits ; perfect courage ; utter simplicity ; absolute veracity ; a rectitude which hardly understood guile, yet could rise to an heroic moral indignation. Gentle, but forceful ; incapable of withholding or qualifying the truth as he saw it, yet as incapable of unkindness as he was insensible to the consideration of unpopularity or the sentiment of fear ; penetrating in thought ; generous in spirit ; a moralist firm on all great issues, but petty or finical in nothing ; a thoroughly healthy, large, serene and virile nature—

“ The elements

So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, ‘ This was a man ! ’ ”

He loved God with a natural, practical piety which shamed affectation and corrected enthusiasm ; a direct and filial trust, which brushed aside the technicalities of dogma, and made mysticism trivial. Obedience and service were the oblations he offered to the Father. He loved man as his brother, and revered him as God’s child ; and when the test came, failed not to see the Son of Man returning in the black and scarred person of the African slave.

Against a nation outraging the brightest maxims of its fundamental political creed ; against the majority in Church and State ; against many of his own people, whom it cut him to the quick to grieve, he stood—for

long almost alone of public men in this city—to rebuke, to warn, to plead against the crime of slavery, more than a quarter of a century, till the lurid fires of war purged his country of her plague. But he made this Church a beacon and Mecca for the oppressed, and those who sought to rescue them; for all who loved humanity and would vindicate freedom of the person and of the mind.

To Dr. Furness's other particular form of service I may just allude. Enthusiastic and life-long was his devotion to the study of *Jesus*, his career, his character, his place in history. We must acknowledge and commemorate here the vast service which our friend rendered to the thought of his time by his acute, sympathetic, and most suggestive and attractive interpretation of that great personality. To the intelligent apprehension of the nature of Jesus, as an example of strictly normal, unconfused, unqualified manhood, I think no writer of his long period contributed more. He did not *argue*; he simply *illustrated* a fact which metaphysics have so unfortunately obscured. And in the mirror of his clear analysis, men saw with the eyes of their own minds the true man of Nazareth, their brother, standing!

These were his chief tasks; for which our friend and father will be especially remembered in the world. But his treatment, Sunday after Sunday, of every great theme of religion and morals was not less profound and moving, as his discourses which have been preserved to us amply show. His tendencies from the first were distinctly progressive. Religion he made utterly practical, undogmatic and spiritual, and especially *ethical*. The application to life never failed to ensue from any line of reflection which he

pursued with his people. He was, indeed, much at home in this community, where the influence of the Society of Friends was so long paramount, from his distrust of forms and professions. His way of personal life illustrated his uttered thought. It was transparent, natural, the vivid expression of the interior man. He could affect no sentiment which was not cogently present in his soul. He walked these streets for seventy years, genuine, simple, firm, brave, loving, unworldly, most human in all his sympathies, a true child of God. The exponent, for three score years and ten, of unpopular truth; opposing himself, throughout his most active generation of service, to acute political as well as religious antagonisms, he won the ever-increasing respect and affection of this whole community. As preacher, scholar, philanthropist, man, he became, perhaps I may even say, our leading citizen.

The force and magnetism of the young preacher of 1825 wrought an immediate influence upon the fortunes of the Society. So did their numbers increase that, within three years it became desirable to erect a larger church edifice. The little octagon disappeared and the second building arose, of the Greek temple type formerly so popular, and itself grew venerable amidst its trees and graves. For a longer time than Herod's temple was in building it was the scene of the preacher's religious labors, till he, too, though hale and strong, grew old in years, and as his half-century closed, desired release from formal responsibility and the cares of his office.

A year later, in 1876, the present ministry began. During the hundred years of its existence, therefore,

which we are celebrating, this Church has had but two clerical pastors.

Our recent annals may be briefly recited. It has not seemed worth while to glean and elaborate now the particulars of a history uneventful—and therefore happy—but I trust not unfruitful. In the chronicles of church life, I think none ever flowed with smoother current. It is the established custom of this Society to act, as Friends say, “in unity.” A decade of years ago, the only important incident of our life occurred in our removal to our present site and this building in which we are met, every stone of which and all its appurtenances were wholly our own before they were appropriated to use. It is a monument, not only to the fidelity of its own people, but, in several instances, to the unsolicited liberality of some who had before been members or who knew of the work and spirit of the Society and testified their sympathy by their munificence. A noble convention of our Unitarian body signalized its dedication to the uses of religion. Alas, how do such landmarks of history expose the fleetingness of our human life! Of those who then spoke, indeed, only two voices, thank God, are stilled, and those of veterans, already, in His service. But of the men and women who composed the Society, how many personalities these ten years have taken from us! So do “man’s busy generations pass”! I often wondered at the state of consciousness of my dear predecessor, who had seen so many congregations, as it were, vanish before him and replace themselves. Even to myself, when I recall the circle of friends who welcomed me to this ministry, and look for them, the place seems void and present countenances look almost strange!

Yet thank God for this law of our being! It is what we are here, dear friends, to celebrate! Progress, progress, eternally! Thank God that we have here, "no continuing city." That evermore He hath "prepared some better thing for us"!

How the times have changed; how thought in its various departments has expanded and prospered; how different is the spirit of this closing age from that of its beginning; it will be the office of other speakers on this occasion to set forth. The story they will tell shall make us rejoice! For in the midst of a day, cloudy and unpleasing in our national condition; doubtful, perhaps, in regard to the course of moral and spiritual development awaiting our near successors; I am sure they will show to us the presence, the imperial power of TRUTH; its infinite resources; its certain triumph; and the absolute security of him who trusts in it. In that trust this Church was founded. In it, I believe, it steadfastly abides. As they, that honest fourteen of 1796, their grave, intrepid leader and the associates they came to know; as the builders of our former temples and the men and women who worshipped in either; as he who led them all, through a term so remarkable, in a spirit so serene and steady; as many a dear one of our private lives and all the myriads of the world's past,—have lived, and loved, have served, enjoyed and suffered; have died and here been seen no more:—but all have *learned*, have gathered truth, even by their failures, their follies, their sins; so we, who still walk the ways of earth for our little day, who meet here now to celebrate our predecessors, their blessings and their acts, shall soon take up the path they all have trodden.

Let us think this process not a sad but a joyful,

a glorious thing ; to mount from stage to stage of experience, of the observation of divine truth, of spiritual growth.

Only, while our earthly day lasts, let us fulfill well that function which is the distinction and peculiar privilege of humanity, to take in truth, to develop and present it to the generations following.

To this office and duty the members of this religious society will be newly dedicated, I trust, by the solemn-joyful exercises of thanksgiving and commemoration for which we are now assembled.

To the maintenance of reverent freedom in religious inquiry ; to the worship of the fatherly God, in filial love, in pious awe, in the spirit of service ; to the vindication of the dignified quality of our human nature, as derived from and in essence akin to the Divine ; to the upholding and furtherance of the moral law ; to promoting in every practical way the welfare and progress of humanity ; to these sacred duties, dear friends, members of my religious flock, of this now ancient Church, let us in this hour, freely, sincerely, prayerfully consecrate ourselves anew.

By the memory of the past of our Society, so richly blessed and prospered, so mercifully watched and guided ; by the memory of the worthy men who have handed it down to us ; of him whom we loved so well, its long-time pastor, of all of us the friend ; by all our former mercies and present blessings, let us freshly take up, with grateful, courageous hearts, the sacred task to which each true Church is called, of reconciling and uniting men with God ; of attaining, illustrating and promoting His truth ; of achieving, severally and socially, the divine ideals of humanity.

And you, friends all who unite with us in our rejoicings ; whom now I welcome cordially on behalf of my people ; as you participate in our festival, give us, I pray you, with the kindly congratulations you will abundantly offer, give us also your encouragements, your prayers, that in all that goes to make a Church a true one ; in the lives of all who compose it, people and pastor ; in the services it shall hereafter render in this community to the cause of religion, of morality, of intellectual progress, of social welfare, of spiritual living, ours may show itself not unworthy of whatever has been best in its own past ; unready for no call of God, though it should be to unpopularity, to sacrifice, to suffering ; pervaded by the true spirit of Jesus ; unworldly, self-forgetting, self-devoting ; conscious of the goodness of God, and zealous to spread His truth, to make known His love, to benefit His children, to bring in His kingdom.

SICUT PATRIBUS, SIT DEUS NOBIS !

A CENTURY OF UNITARIANISM

REV. CHARLES CARROLL EVERETT, D. D., LL. D.

"Thy kingdom come."—MATT. vi. 9.

"For, lo, the kingdom of God is within you."—LUKE xvii. 21.

From whatever point of view it is regarded, the occasion that brings us together is one of interest. If it were merely the centennial celebration of a church, it would be an important event; for such occasions are not very common among us. It is also the centennial of a denomination. If we had an ecclesiastical hierarchy, like that of the Anglican communion, this church would be our metropolitan see. We have no such technical distinction, but we can at least bring to it the honor and reverence that are its due.

It is not merely because of its age and its priority that we may thus honor it. It has in other ways shown its right to its proud position. Few churches could stand more worthily as the representative of our common faith. We may look upon it as having been, through the changes of these hundred years, to a very large degree fitted to be the leader and inspirer of the churches that have, one after another, borne the same honorable, if not always honored, name.

It may be interesting, as it is certainly suitable, to the occasion, to glance very briefly at the changes through which the denomination has passed during these years, that we may see how this church has met the exigencies of each distinct period of its history, and thus fulfilled the demands that the century has made upon it.

I. The Period of Unitarian Affirmation

We may rudely divide the history of our denomination into three great periods—the first, the age of Unitarian affirmation, when modern Unitarianism as a denomination began to proclaim its doctrine. It is spoken of as the time of the “Unitarian controversy.” In spite of certain differences, the denomination presented, or, seen from this distance, seems to have presented, a fairly united front to the world. It was a time of intense intellectual activity in the sphere of religious thought. The fact that the introduction of Unitarianism, so far, at least, as some of our oldest societies are concerned, was accomplished by the disruption of previously existing organizations added often a certain bitterness to the discussion. Churches cut themselves loose from the societies in which they were embodied with a wrench something like that of the separation of soul and body. The interest in theology was widely extended in those days. The churches of the sterner and more Calvinistic order had presented religion in a way to defy the reason and to excite the terrors of men, or else to call forth indignant protests from those who refused to accept its dogmas. Thus many were ready for the new teaching, while the churches that stood by the old form of doctrine were roused to zealous defence of their position. Through all this eagerness of discussion, this indignation at the dogmas that were preached under the name of religion, this hungering for the bread of life, the Unitarian belief made more rapid gain than was possible after denominational relations had settled into new forms ; more than is possible now, when much of so-called orthodox preaching is as broad as some that in the earlier days was heard in Unitarian pulpits. Now, creeds seem to be made of

rubber instead of iron ; and, on the other hand, many find it easy to abstain from church-going if the doctrines to which they would listen in their special churches are unpalatable to them.

II. The Period of Internal Division

The next period that we may recognize in the development of our Unitarian denomination is that of internal division.

This period is separated from that which we have just considered by no line of sharp demarcation. It grew out of it as youth grows out of childhood, and manhood out of youth. The earliest form under which this division manifested itself was political. At first a few, and by slow degrees more, of our ministers were moved to protest against the sin of slavery. It was not, however, till the great body of the citizens of the North were aroused to the fierce patriotism of the Civil War, that preachers against slavery formed more than a small proportion of our ministers. This subject introduced a disturbing and unmanageable element into our ministry. Preachers who were prominent in this respect were regarded as troublesome members of the brotherhood. Especially were the congregations annoyed and perplexed by such manifestations. Those who were moved to utterance by this great theme were apt to be extremely intense in their convictions and their denunciations. One minister is reported to have said that he did not allow his mind to dwell upon slavery, for he noticed that those who did this could soon think of little else. Even temperate speech was very objectionable to many congregations. The committee of Dr. Channing's church kept a certain guard over

him, in order that no announcement of an anti-slavery meeting should reach his hands.

With the utterances of Emerson and Parker there came a new element of disturbance. There had always been different wings in the Unitarian body, as in all bodies that have life ; but the difference had not occasioned very noticeable contrast. What was later known as the left wing, or what most resembled this, was, in this country at least, comparatively small in numbers, and was not obtrusive in the assertion of its beliefs. With Emerson and Parker began what may be called the battle of the wings. The words "conservative" and "radical" were freely used. The proportion of pronounced radicals was at first not large ; but they had the courage of their convictions, and made their presence felt. Many ministers took little part in the discussion ; but there were probably few that were not more or less conscious of their position in the strife, who did not feel themselves more or less conservative or radical, or who did not strive to mediate between the opposing hosts. The great questions were in regard to miracles, the supernatural authority of the Bible, and sometimes as to the supremacy of Christianity itself.

These were trying days for parishes and parish committees. Of the young men entering the ministry, the strongest and most promising were apt to be more or less affected with heresy. When radicalism in theology and radicalism in politics met, as was often the case, in the same person, the situation was grave, indeed.

Channing represented the principle of individualism. Emerson in this out-Channinged Channing, and the followers of Emerson went beyond their master. Political radicalism, theological radical-

ism, and an exulting spirit of individualism,—this combination made sometimes a magnificent man, but not one that the churches found most fitted for their use. One such young man said to me, speaking of his congregation, “They say that I shake their faith; but what is a faith good for that will not bear a little shaking?” When the war broke out, this man became a chaplain in the army. During his service he volunteered to take part as a soldier in some perilous expedition, and was slain. Another, a classmate of mine in the Divinity School, a radical of the radicals, brilliant in epigram, eager in mental and physical activity, had been a strong advocate for peace. When the war broke out, it gave him serious matter for thought. He refused to preach until he had decided whether the war was right or wrong. He decided that it was right and inevitable. The next Sunday he preached a war sermon. The following Monday he enlisted as a private. His regiment, pleased and proud that they had a young minister in their ranks, made him their chaplain. During the war, like the other of whom I spoke, he volunteered to share the work and the peril of the soldier, and also fell.

I recall the memory of these two to show something of the spirit that filled many of our preachers at the time. Few, perhaps, manifested it to the same degree. There were, however, sincerity and earnestness and fearlessness and a lofty ideal of manhood in some of these men who were a thorn in the side of our parishes. They may in some things have been in error; they may at times have been swept on too far by the joy of the conflict: but they were true men.

It has often been urged that a system by which the minister is dependent upon his congregation for the

permanence of his position and the adequacy of support would tend to produce time-servers. The minister, it has been thought, would be tempted to lower his ideal or to forsake it, in order to keep the peace with the congregation upon which he was dependent. Doubtless many ministers have been affected in this way. The history of the times of which I speak shows that this is not necessarily the case. I doubt if the record of any ministry, no matter by what patronage it is supported, could show examples of greater independence and fearlessness of speech and act than could be found in many of the Congregational churches of America.

During the years of which I have been speaking it seemed sometimes as if cleavage would take place within the Unitarian body similar to that by which it was formed ; as if Congregationalism would continue to multiply itself indefinitely by a process of gemmation. The bond that united the elements that seemed at times so opposed was stronger than the force which would separate them. The centripetal impulse held the centrifugal in check.

At last this sense of a common life began to assert itself with more force than it had done before ; and the Unitarian Church entered upon what may loosely be called the third era, and thus far the last, of its development,—the era of organization.

III. The Era of Organization

The formation of the National Conference was the formal expression of this sense of unity. It is true that within the National Conference the wings have now and then renewed their earlier strife, but the very

formation of this organization expressed the longing for a more real and active fellowship. So far as I have noticed, there is in these later years in our Unitarian preaching fewer formal attacks upon orthodox belief, and less insistence upon the points which separate the right and left wings of our church, than was formerly the case. I do not mean that such preaching is now out of place as something for which there is no further need. There will, I suppose, always be occasion for the utterance of one's belief in the sharpest way, and for the comparison of it with that of others. I am merely stating what I conceive to be a fact. So far as the relation of the two parties in the Unitarian Church is concerned, I suppose that this calm is occasioned in part by the fact that the views called radical have to a large extent found recognition in the churches, and have, therefore, less need to contend for their right to be. But more important than this, so far as the present condition of things is concerned, is the temper of our churches. The tendency is to positive rather than negative utterance, to emphasize what all hold in common rather than that which is peculiar to one and another, to strive to promote religion and morality in general rather than to defend certain dogmas.

I have spoken of this as the era of organization. This is illustrated not merely by the formation of the National Conference. As the organizing tendency of a vine extends to every leaf and tendril, so does the tendency to organization in our religious life extend to the individual churches. Not only is it the era of church parlors and even of church kitchens. Much more important than this, it is the era of organized work in many of our churches in the great cause of

charity and reform. The Unitarian body has from its earliest days made its influence felt in this direction. Professor Peabody, in his interesting address in Washington last autumn, showed the important work which in the earlier days of American Unitarianism our churches in Boston accomplished for the poor. What is peculiar to the present is that so many separate churches are converting themselves into institutions for practical benevolence and reform. To all this may be added the further organization within our separate churches of associations for general and for religious culture—Unity Clubs, Guilds, and I know not how many others. These movements of the great ocean have made themselves felt in our sheltered bay of the Divinity School. Some years ago many sermons and essays bristled with negations. Now, the students are beginning to clamor for greater opportunities to study the methods of charities and reforms and the better organization of individual churches.

As I stated at the beginning, the divisions that I have made are to a great extent superficial. Through its whole history our denomination has been doing practically the same work in the same way. Our ministers have sought to bring spiritual strength to their congregations and to all whom they could reach. They have maintained the doctrines of our Church in the specific form in which they held them. They have striven to be of service to the communities in which they lived. If the divisions that I have made are superficial, they are no less real. If I have somewhat exaggerated differences, the differences have none the less existed. They form thus a convenient method of representing the history of our denomination and,

what is our present business, of surveying very briefly the work of the Church, the centennial of which we celebrate.

The Philadelphia Church

Of the manner in which the lay preachers, who for the first twenty-nine years of its existence sustained this church, maintained the principles of Unitarianism I have no knowledge. We can judge somewhat of the foundation that they laid from the superstructure that has rested upon it. "*Si monumentum quæris, circumspice.*" We find evidence of their early success in the fact that under this lay ministration a church was built that would seat between two and three hundred persons.

The Work of Dr. Furness

Of the method employed by Dr. Furness in theological controversy we can only say that his method would seem to have been to abstain from it altogether. He believed in the simple statement of his own conception of religious doctrine. Indeed, for the doctrine itself he cared comparatively little. He regarded Unitarianism not as a form of doctrine, but as something "infinitely better." He said of it: "It is a spirit—a spirit of 'love, and of power and of a sound mind,' a spirit that may coexist in greater or less fulness with every variety of opinion." Unitarianism as such and the denomination which bears its name counted for as little with him as with Dr. Channing. If the spirit which he loved, and to the furtherance of which he devoted his life, manifested itself in anything of its true beauty and power, he was content, no matter

what name it bore. The development of this Church, its influence in the community, the springing up of other Unitarian churches in its neighborhood, show that his ministry did not fail in the accomplishment of that which it did not seek ; while in the simpler faith and the broader sympathies of the churches that are known by other names, he saw the real triumph of the cause that he had most at heart.

In what I have called the second period of the development of Unitarianism in this country, the period of political and theological division within the denomination, Dr. Furness occupied a prominent and interesting position. He whom in later years we have known as occupying a position somewhat like that of the beloved disciple in its loving nearness to the Master, was in these days of conflict also a "son of Thunder." He was widely known as a champion of the anti-slavery cause. In looking back upon his life, he said : "As the pastor of a Christian Church, I felt myself *ex officio* the presiding officer of an anti-slavery society." That some members of his society differed with him in this respect cannot surprise us. Dr. Furness gives an account of an anti-slavery meeting in New York in which he took part. The story, as he tells it, is one of the most vivid and interesting pictures of those times that we possess. He returned full of enthusiasm, which he seems to have expected his people to share. When, however, he described the scene to one of his parishioners, he was told that there had been some thought of calling an indignation meeting of the Church to express the mortification that was felt at his "going and mixing himself up with such people" as Garrison, Douglass, and their like. To the credit of his society it should be said that, on the whole, it

stood by him through these troublesome times, until all the world could afford to take a position against slavery.

So far as the struggle between the right and left wings of the denomination is concerned, Dr. Furness occupied a position as unique as it was interesting. I do not know whether to call him the most radical of conservatives or the most conservative of radicals. He took for granted that there was nothing unnatural or supernatural, according to the common meaning of these words, in the life of Jesus. On the other hand, he clung to the thought of the personality of Jesus as presented in the Gospels, and to the truth of the chief incidents of His life as the Gospels narrate them. Indeed, among those who in the orthodox churches hold to the Christo-centric theology, which has such wide acceptance in these days, there are few in whose thought Christ is more central than He was to Dr. Furness. The labor of much of his life was to bring into harmony elements that seem so directly opposed to one another as the natural and what appears to be the supernatural. If he was always succeeding, and always finding that his success was not quite complete, and always approaching the problem anew with unabated courage, it was perhaps because the problem, in the manner in which he approached it, was insoluble. The attempt, however, kept the thought of Jesus ever fresh in his mind, and tended also to keep this thought fresh in the minds of his hearers and of the readers of his books.

This constant nearness to the Master added doubtless to the happiness of that life which had so many sources of happiness. "Call no man happy," the proverb says, "till he is dead." As we look back upon

the life of Dr. Furness, in spite of its struggles and sorrows, we may now pronounce it happier than that of most. A calling that he loved, literary and general interests that stretched far beyond his calling, friendships unusually wide and close, the honor of those who differed most from him, usefulness and health, the mastery of himself and of his resources during the whole of his beautiful age, make his life seem almost an ideal one. — “Say nothing but good of the dead,” bids another proverb. This proverb is not needed here. Who could say anything of him that is not good?

The Present Church

Of the relation of this Church to the third era of our denominational history it is happily not yet the time to speak at length. It may not, however, be out of place to say that it has met the needs of the present as it has met those of the past. Its interest in the organization of our body is shown by the fact that by the invitation of this Church the National Conference held one of its recent sessions here. The Church itself is an organized ministry of helpfulness to many who need. The cold water that flows for the thirsty passer-by is a true symbol and expression of the refreshment which the spiritual life of the Church offers to those within its reach.

Our Debt to the Eighteenth Century

As I close this hasty outline sketch of one hundred years of Unitarianism, and of the manner in which this Church has borne itself through the changes which they brought, other and larger aspects of the occasion force themselves upon the mind.

We look back over a hundred years, and we see this Church, and with it the name and form of Unitarianism, presented to our country as one of the latest and most characteristic gifts of the eighteenth century to ours. It may occasion surprise to some to hear this religious offering spoken of as characteristic of the eighteenth century. We are apt to think of that century as one of superficiality and conceit, of artificiality and of unbelief. We think of the sneer of Voltaire, of the sentimentality of Rousseau, of the selfish philosophy of Helvetius, and the materialism of Holbach, of the warfare of the Encyclopædists on what was held most true and holy. We think of the French philosophy as representing, only in a more intense form, the general style of thought of the century, which indeed it had largely influenced, as it had been influenced by it. We think of the negative philosophy of Hume and the mechanical philosophy of Hartley. We compare Pope and Swift, who ushered in the eighteenth century, with Wordsworth, who ushered in the nineteenth. We think of the profound philosophy of Hegel and of the lofty and reverent poetry of Tennyson and Browning and other singers who have glorified our age. If the eighteenth century at times caught a deeper note, we see in it the prelude to the better age that was to come. Even in the matter of religion, Paley with his somewhat mundane theology and ethics seems to us to represent the best that the Establishment had to offer. The freer religious thought often found its most congenial expression in the somewhat cold and often vague faith called Deism; while in Methodism we have the protest of the warm religious heart against the formalism by which it was surrounded. If we look at the outward world, we are tempted to accept the mad-

ness and the terror of the French Revolution as being the final outbreak of all those negative forces which had been working in darkness, though bursting forth now and then through those years of unbelief. Then we think of the proud name which this year of negation claimed for itself. It was the age of enlightenment of *Aufklärung*. It felt that in it the world had reached its age of reason.

This is, I say, to a large extent the general notion in regard to the eighteenth century. Of course, the picture is exaggerated. Of course, it leaves much out of the account; but we must admit that it is not wholly without truth. In spite of all this, I feel that we should on this occasion recognize the mighty debt which we owe to that century which, as it was about to depart, gave us this Church, with all that it represents. We look down upon it; but how did we reach the height from which we look down upon it? How did we obtain the great blessings which we prize, and rightly prize, so highly? Think of the conditions which the eighteenth century had to meet. Think of the darkness of theologic creeds. Think of the oppression of the Church. Think of the oppression of the State, especially in France, whose negative thought through those years of what we call irreligion struck to so large an extent the key-note for the rest of Christendom. Think what must have been the style of that Christianity which so represented its Founder that Voltaire could see in it only a monster that should be crushed. As the French Revolution, with its thunder and smoke, and the cleaving asunder of the very foundation of the earth, was hardly more than was needed to clear the ground for a freer and better time, so the negations of the century were hardly too many and too strong

to disturb the basis of bigotry and intolerance that strove to make freedom of utterance and advancement of thought impossible. Did you never see a landscape where powder and axe and fire seemed to have done their worst, leaving the sward upturned, and the ground disfigured by stumps and charred branches and scattered rocks ; and as you looked upon it, did you, perhaps, blame the vandalism that had wrought this destruction? But when you passed again, and saw some stately building standing in the place of this desolation, and looked upon smooth lawns and gardens beautiful with flowers, and trees standing fair and stately, freed from the lesser growths that had cramped and obscured them, have you not felt grateful for the destruction which you had at first condemned? Something like this was the work which the negative forces of the last century were performing. Even the materialistic and mechanical philosophy of the time had its place. Men felt that here at least the ground was solid beneath their feet. Thus was the way prepared for what seems to us the better world in which we live.

Even Priestley, whose memory we so love and honor, was a true child of his century. In his love of science he shared its best. He shared also to the extreme its philosophic theories. He did not hesitate to call these by their most objectionable names. He did not hesitate to avow himself a fatalist and a materialist. But with all this he possessed the most beautiful religious faith, a faith without dogmatic narrowness, the sweetest and most childlike trust in the infinite Father, in whose controlling guidance he felt secure, a trust in the strength of which he could enter upon the sleep of death as quietly and as hopefully as

he could sink into the rest of a night. This simple religious faith had grown upon the ground which negative criticism had cleared. It was through the struggles to which I have referred that the eighteenth century was able to present to ours one of its best gifts, our Unitarian faith. In this, religion, purified by the fierce criticism that had been turned upon it, entered upon a fairer and purer life.

Responsibilities of Liberty

I have spoken as if it were for us that the eighteenth century had doubted and denied and mocked, and had striven to lay the foundations of belief upon the solid ground of the material world. We certainly enjoy the results which that age made possible. We enjoy our political and our religious liberty. We can think our own thoughts and utter them. We can go about our own ways, and do quietly our own work, and enjoy our homes in peace. We may well be grateful to the age that did so much for us. We may naturally feel that it was for us that the eighteenth century fought and labored.

As we look more closely at ourselves and our surroundings, we may, however, doubt whether we are not claiming too much, whether we are, indeed, the real inheritors of all this fair accomplishment.

What a magnificent thing is liberty! How through all the ages of the past have men suffered for it and died for it! How have they consoled themselves through hardship and sacrifice by the vision of the coming time, when, partly through their labors, man should be free? Well, freedom is at last secured. What prophets and righteous men have desired to see

and have not seen is the reality in the midst of which we dwell. If these seers could behold the reality, do you think it would seem to them quite to fulfil their dream? In their vision they saw men seriously gathering to select their best and their wisest to frame and execute the laws that should protect, while they did not hamper, the activities of life. They saw in their vision those thus called to high places entering seriously and reverently upon their work, consulting only for the best good of their country. This they saw in their vision: would they see it in the reality? Liberty they might have pictured as a tree, beautiful in its growth, its leafage, and its fruit. If they could behold the present, they would see the tree strong and stately; but how defiled would they find it by the corruption that feeds upon its fairest leaves, and spins its loathsome nest even on its loftiest branches! Are Americans in love with liberty? Why, then, do so many against their better judgment or without serious thought follow their political leaders, or idly stand aloof, raising no arm against the tyranny that is working mischief for our best interests? Why do so many create masters for themselves, at whose command they give up the right to earn their daily bread? We have no kings, so we make them, or oftener let them make themselves; and I cannot see that they are better than those our fathers cast aside.

No; we are not yet the rightful heritors for whom this splendid preparation has been made. Like the men in the story who found themselves in the palace of the giants, we do not feel ourselves quite at home in the grand halls which the past has built for some coming race. We are still workmen, whose task is to prepare, unless we are idlers, wandering here and there, sur-

veying the majestic piles. We play at ownership. We place ourselves on the waiting seats. We speak from the vacant tribunes. Even in the large and open church we do not yet feel ourselves quite at home. Upon its walls hang the consecrated weapons. We are not yet wholly fitted for their use. How many hands can swing the sword of the spirit which waits for him who shall therewith vanquish the world? How many brows bear altogether worthily the helmet which is the hope of salvation? How many arms uplift with glad confidence the shield of faith? But they will come,—they for whom all this was builded and prepared. We listen for the distant music that shall herald their approach, for the tread of their coming feet. They shall come, that nation of patriots, who shall know what it is to prize and to use the dearly-bought liberty that to us means so little. They shall come, the law-givers, who have a sense of the honor and the responsibility of their high calling, to whom political life is neither a game nor a speculation. They shall come, the Christians, for whom waits the armor of the Lord, the hand that shall draw from its resting place the sword of the spirit, as Siegmund drew forth the sword Nothung from the ash-tree in Hunding's house, and shall wield it as the one to whom it rightfully belongs.

The nineteenth century has been but a sharer in the work of preparation which the eighteenth carried on so far, but did not finish. O better age that is to come, we, too, may make the humble boast that we have done something to make ready for thy presence! Thou wilt find the might of steam and of lightning waiting to do thy bidding! We are meanwhile playing with that which thou wilt use. Thou wilt find the

land swept clean of slavery. Thou wilt find a religious life more large and free than it has ever been before. Thou wilt find walls of bigotry, not yet indeed removed, but yielding, and here and there ready to fall. The Church and the State are here. Come, and take possession of thine own.

But what if the twentieth century should be, like the nineteenth and the eighteenth, only a workman busied in the preparation—not he that should come, but one still looking for another? What if the later ages as they succeed it and one another should be carrying on simply the same work, making ready for that kingdom of heaven, the thought of which still lures them on? We know not what the end shall be, whether that holy city which John saw in his vision shall ever be established on the earth, and into it shall enter nothing that defiles. .

Can it be that we are looking for it where it is not, and thus fail to see it where it is? While we strain our ears to listen for its coming, perhaps it may be, in a form for which we did not look, already near us. While we pray “Thy kingdom come,” and wait and watch for the fulfilment of our prayer, we hardly listen to the words of Jesus when he says, “The kingdom of God is within you.” No matter how corrupt the State or how weak the Church may be, the kingdom of heaven is established in the heart of every one who is striving to shape the outward world according to the vision witnessed on the mount. Thus the ages stand on a grand equality. All are preparers; but, so far as they are really eager in the work of preparation, they already enjoy something of the fruition of their labors. What coming century will have a hero purer and nobler, more simple-hearted and more

strong, than he by whom this Church was founded a hundred years ago? Who will say that the kingdom of heaven had no place in the life of him who, had he remained yet a few short months, would have been the centre and inspiration of this occasion, though our reverence would have been more silent? And were there none for whom he opened the way into the same glad fellowship? Thus, while we do not know whether the ideal of a social state toward which we strive will ever find complete fulfilment, or whether, as in the geometrical mystery, there will be continual approach with never an actual meeting, we do know that every approach to that complete result brings blessing. We know, too, that all who long and strive for its fulfilment are already citizens of that heavenly kingdom. Thus we may still look forward to the better time that is to come, and call our greetings to the future race, who will use more worthily than we the priceless gains the past has won; while we know that the better time, when it shall come, will show no nobler heroes than some that our own age has seen, no nobler than earlier and darker ages have beheld.

We have, then, this paradox: the kingdom of heaven is always coming, yet it is always here; a paradox perhaps to the understanding; may many of us find its solution in our hearts and lives!

Now let us bid this venerated Church Godspeed as it enters upon its second century, and pray that in the double function of preparation and accomplishment its future may be even nobler than its past.

ADDRESS OF CONGRATULATION

REV. HOWARD N. BROWN

I esteem myself fortunate in being able to bring to this celebration of a century of active, honorable and unstained church-life, the congratulations of what is undoubtedly, in fact though not in name, the oldest Unitarian Church in this new world. The Preface to the King's Chapel Prayer Book of 1785 may seem to the casual reader to be little more than a declaration of ecclesiastical independence, corresponding to the proclamation of civil liberty that had been made and successfully maintained by former subjects of the English throne. That, in truth, is the highest significance of the action taken by the Church in ordaining its own minister without the help of a Bishop, and in changing its liturgy without the consent of any outside authority.

But if we examine the nature of these changes we find that they consisted almost entirely in leaving out phrases which gave offence at that time to Unitarian consciences. There can be no doubt that King's Chapel in that year of grace was under the control of men whose views were substantially those of English Unitarians. The documentary proof is explicit, and the unpleasant things said of the chapel, then and ever since, by orthodox critics, is evidence enough that in their regard the Church became at that time heretical. While you, therefore, are observing the centennial of your foundation as a Unitarian Church, it is now eleven years since King's Chapel passed the one hun-

dredth anniversary of the publication of a book which sufficiently informed the world that the dogma of the Trinity was no more to be taught from its pulpit.

It is said that at the time this Church was founded some advice came from Boston against taking the Unitarian name. This tradition may have for you an unsuspected interest ; because Joseph May, the grandfather of your present minister, an honored merchant of Boston, was for thirty years a Warden of King's Chapel, and is said to have been the most intimate friend of James Freeman, its minister. They were so closely associated that together they brought out a book of hymns for the use of the chapel in 1799. It is more than probable that any opinion expressed in that quarter as to religious affairs in this city was the subject of conference between these two men. It may well be true that such advice was given, and yet imply no distrust of Unitarian belief. Some of us, even now, hold it the wiser policy to reserve that name for our general organizations, leaving the individual church to be known by some wholly undenominational title. The general implication of a denominational name, that the church which bears it is under the control of some sectarian management, and is compelled to walk in a certain path, makes not a little difficulty for us in explaining that our churches are entirely free and independent. Some of our own kith and kin, who ought to know better, have assumed that because a church is called "Unitarian" therefore it must be more or less under the sway of a narrow sectarian spirit. There are unquestionably two sides to this question of policy, but it is not the fair inference that because King's Chapel refused to take, or advised others not to assume a name somewhat involved with

dogmatic controversies, therefore it was indifferent toward Unitarian ideas.

As the minister, then, of the oldest Church of our common faith in this country, a Church, moreover, which was already a century old when the bud of Unitarian thought was grafted upon its vigorous stock, it is a pleasure to me to bring congratulations to this sister Church upon its attainment of a hundred years of useful life. Though there is with us no shadow even of a Primacy of influence among our religious organizations, yet when one must needs be selected to speak for all, it is not entirely presumptuous if, for the moment, I assume to represent all those Churches which have followed the lead of King's Chapel in throwing off the yoke of ecclesiastical domination.

For, after all, the main significance of the first manifestations of the leaven of Unitarian thought in American life was not that this or that theological belief was brought to the front, but was the larger assertion of the right of the individual Church, in the last resort, to shape its own worship and belief. Independency, before the beginnings of our movement, had hardly dared to invade the realm of religious ideas. Congregationalism had given to each company of believers the right to choose its own officers, but had not learned to tolerate much divergence of belief from a fixed standard. For the moment, the members of a church, originally planted in New England to resist the growth of the spirit of liberty, took a step far in advance of the recognized champions of religious freedom, when they gave shelter to ideas that no other religious organization dared to espouse or entertain.

But when we define the great truth thus announced and upheld, as the right of the individual Church to

determine the form of its prayers and the intellectual bond of its union, we do well to remember, also, that the congregation needs to use its conscience with some care as an ultimate court of appeal. No church is discharged from an obligation to learn from others whatever their life can teach; to keep step with other churches just so far as honor and conscience will permit; to indulge itself in no mere whims or vagaries, but to strain the bonds of brotherhood to the utmost before permitting them to be broken.

Religious liberty is no mad race to take a prize for singularity; no heedlessness toward the wise counsels of common Christian experience. They who feel that every day is to be counted lost when some shackles of the mind are not broken, and who, without much regard to circumstances of the hour, think to continue the line of prophets by offering any kind of provocation whereby they may cause themselves to be stoned, are not safe guides along the path of religious development.

Independence in religion, when it is victimized by jealousy of other organizations on the field, or an insane dread of being enslaved by those who extend a hand for mutual helpfulness, is subject to a worse tyrant than most kings and priests have proven. Congregationalism demands for its success, on the one hand, much respect for common traditions and usages; no jocund readiness for any position of protest or dissent that may offer, but rather some unwillingness to be found at variance from one's brethren. On the other hand, it demands a very solemn and tenacious clinging to the duty of the individual soul and the individual Church, to take, though it be in sadness and loneliness, the path of isolation in which a divine spirit seems to lead the way.

This is much more a duty than a right, because it establishes one of the first conditions for the development of a strong spiritual life. Let us for one brief moment consider what is the real justification for that basis of freedom which we claim. In recent years our eyes have been dazzled by a brilliant succession of new scientific discoveries, and it is not strange if some have persuaded themselves that like results are to be found within the realm of religious truth, if only the requisite freedom for investigation can be attained. In fact, many earnest people do now appear to assume that this is what our liberty means, and is for; and that we are to go on to discoveries that will revolutionize our inward life, as our outward life has been transformed by steam and electricity. Far be it from me to maintain that no such light, even of surpassing glory, is yet to break forth from the divine mysteries surrounding us; though to me it seems probable that we have greater need to grow up to the sublime insights of the past than to strive for new revelations of our own.

But let it be granted that free thought is yet to unfold many new and much-needed truths; I should still hold that this is not first and above all what our freedom is for. We are learning, surely if slowly, that the religious spirit and the religious life demand some close association of minds for their largest development; and the fact is that no association capable of high and noble things is possible save where minds come together in the freedom of the spirit. Where two or three are met together, there a new and mighty energy, which we are beginning to call the social force, is born; but these two or three only can be builded together "as living stones," to take Paul's phrase, when, without pretences, evasions, or reserves, they

meet in transparent knowledge of each other's thought, and perfect sympathy with each other's purpose and intent.

The men who wrote, on board the Mayflower, that Church Covenant which was the best and most fruitful seed of New England civilization were perfectly free men ; otherwise they had been incapable of what they performed. So far as the range of their thought extended, there was no barrier or limitation to impede the free movement of the spirit within them. This gave them their quality of strong integrity, and made their words ring true, like clear metal. Apart from such childlike sincerity and genuineness of life, those men could no more have been forged into the infant state which was to prove the beginning of a new empire, than rotten ores can be welded into a bar of steel.

Now, above all other reasons, we want liberty in the Church, because we wish to continue that strain of manhood. Men who come together about a creed which they merely hold for substance of doctrine, and whose minds are cramped and hindered of their natural development by artificial forms of thought which they are compelled to wear, cannot, however steadfastly they may continue together in one place, receive much of the Holy Ghost. Hearts ruled by fear, or fashion, or almost anything save a clear vision of the truth, may indeed be builded into the church, as into a solid, seamless wall ; but they cannot be made "one body in Christ," or grow, like living tissue, to be a holy temple of the Lord.

We should be foolish to claim that we, as a company of Christians, possess any monopoly of freedom. Many people holding the beliefs of the Middle Ages are, relatively, as free of thought as we ; for he who is

bounded in a nutshell may still count himself a king of infinite space, if he has no dreams to transcend the limits of his narrow world. Until life teaches the mind to ask those troublesome questions which mark the quickening of dormant faculties, it may dwell among the grossest superstitions and get from them no harm, beholding only what is sweet, and pure, and true.

But sooner or later the time comes when questions have to be asked ; and then woe to that mind which finds its questioning spirit shut up like a caged bird, within bars of self-interest or fear too strong to be broken through. Better that it should go forth and loose itself for a time in limitless depths, or half starve in desert places, than that it should play a hypocrite's part, assuming to be happy and content while all its soul is consumed with a desire for larger life. Such stifling of the higher nature is not only a possible, but a probable source of all infidelities and villainies ; and religious freedom, when men have come to crave it, is, as they have always esteemed it, the most priceless of blessings.

The significance of our position, as we think, is that we have inherited and are trying to maintain a line of religious traditions which, more than any other, makes a plain and even path for the free mind to walk. We do not claim to hold all religious truth in our possession, and we are not expecting our adventurous quest to lead to any El Dorado of spiritual treasure. But we do look for a deeper and truer genuineness of life where people are both allowed and expected to speak their honest thought ; and at last we expect more real organic strength when such people find the ways in which they can work together for the good of humanity.

I congratulate you, then, and all your sister churches congratulate you, most heartily, that you have reached the century mark, living the life of a free Christian Church. To have accomplished this, bearing a name still widely hated and feared among men, is a notable achievement. Let us fully understand that the Church still has power to punish for heresy. Enforced separation from those vast currents of spiritual energy that flow through the main body of the Church is, in itself, a heavy price to pay for the liberty that we enjoy. Nothing but a solemn sense of duty to God and to the coming time, can justify us in maintaining our separate position till we are accorded recognition and fellowship.

If the struggle is hard, and the outcome sometimes appears to be dubious, we are not yet called upon to admit that this is because there is a fatal weakness in our position. A century is a short time to try out such an experiment as that upon which we find ourselves embarked, and especially a century so filled with revolutionary changes and upheavals as this behind us has been. Perhaps never before were those who really made a profession of sailing the seas of thought, and who could not content themselves with riding at anchor in a sheltered haven, forced to face such strong conflicting winds, scattering their little fleets widely apart, and driving them often far astray from any profitable path of spiritual navigation. Add to this that our faith in the spiritual consciousness of mankind, as the seat of authority in religion, encounters the relentless hostility of the great Christian world, which has not yet begun to understand Christ's teaching, "The kingdom of God is within you," and we have reason enough for the fact that ours is still a difficult and laborious task.

But though the century of effort behind us has not yielded us all the success we could have desired, it has given us ample ground of hope and courage for the future. Our obsequies have been so often appointed, and we find ourselves alive after so many predictions of approaching dissolution ; we have fought against such heavy odds in maintaining our cause thus far, and have weathered so many storms which seemed about to engulf us ; surely we may now say with Israel of old, the Lord is on our side, we will not fear what man can do to us.

At last, the thought of the great Christian world begins to turn in our direction. Without boastfulness, and recognizing perfectly that our influence has made only a part of the vast liberalizing and enlightening forces of our age, we may yet claim that we have done our share toward producing the better spirit that begins to be widely manifest in the Church. What mission yet awaits us God only knows ; but at least we ought gratefully to uphold the name and fame of those leaders of ours who were bold for the truth when it was no commendation to the public notice to be suspected of some taint of heresy.

You here have special trusts reposed in you, and a special treasure to preserve for future generations. It is not often that a Church is blessed with so wonderful a personality as that of your venerable minister who has lately gone to his reward. The influence of a life like his, being cherished and preserved in the Church, may have amazing vitality and strength for many years to come. The power of historic association is not to be measured or even surmised by those who have never lived under its magic spell. No doubt it is often a force too conservative in quality, and one

that interferes somewhat with the rights of the living. But, on the other hand, it is a great enrichment, without which our life is left extremely naked and poor.

So has the world been ordered that the second century of the influence of a great and good man is almost as strong as the first, and in some respects the spiritual might and incentive of his memory even seem to increase with years. You go on into the time before you, bearing a great inheritance from the years that are past. What you can yourselves derive from this is only part of the consideration that should keep you loyal to your Church. What you can hold and transmit to your children, and to your children's children yet unborn, is a much weightier question upon your consciences. In the name of Him whose beneficent decree it is that where we labor others to come after us may enter into the fruit of our labor, your sister churches bid you not to be weary in well-doing.

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY DURING THE CENTURY

REV. W. W. FENN

In 1891, before an audience composed mainly of devotional readers and non-professional teachers of the Bible, Dr. Thayer, of the Harvard Divinity School, a Trinitarian Congregationalist, and beyond even the suspicion of an American equal in his department of New Testament Philology, declared that notwithstanding the great, though often exaggerated, differences of opinion among Biblical critics on matters of minor detail all "are agreed that the view of Scripture in which you and I were educated, which has been prevalent here in New England for generations, is untenable. And you and I may convince ourselves that so far, at least, they are thoroughly in the right." The vigorous remonstrances which this remark elicited from many writers in religious periodicals seemed to indicate that, be the unanimous opinion of the critics what it may, the religious public in general is not disposed to admit that there has been, or ever can be, any legitimate change of attitude towards the Bible. Very recently, however, Brander Matthews has warned us not to assume that there is a public in literature—"One public having a taste in common with all its members, since the number of publics having widely divergent likes and dislikes is indefinite, not to say infinite,"—and his caution is needed equally when one is tempted to speak of a religious public, since a horizontal section of the Christian Church at any given time would strongly resemble a cross section

in the types of thought revealed. Undoubtedly there are many devout Christians with a deeply-rooted distrust, even abhorrence, of the higher critics whom they suppose to be animated by bitter hostility towards the Bible and a heartless determination to take away from this needy, burdened world its chief source of comfort and cheer. But it was as cruelly unjust to accuse Lowell and Curtis of being unpatriotic because they called attention to faults in our political and social life which they would fain remove, as it is to charge the higher critics with enmity to the Bible because they cannot affirm it to be "without spot or blemish or any such thing." Are the critics responsible for the existence of the facts which they point out? Surely one cannot be at all acquainted with modern critical literature and fail to perceive that its authors are actuated by no motive to destroy the Bible, but solely by the purpose of establishing the truth. As one reads he becomes imbued with profound respect for the pure unselfish devotion to truth which everywhere appears, and he begins to understand that these much-maligned critics are not antagonistic to the Bible, either in purpose or in effect, but, on the contrary, are its best and truest friends. So far from being objects of suspicion and dislike, they should be welcomed with joy as those who are placing the Bible upon a firm foundation, whence it cannot be dislodged, and from which its light shall shine with added brilliancy upon the pathway of human progress. For, in the face of vehement opposition, the change to which Dr. Thayer referred has already come over the minds of many within, and of most without, the Christian Church. A century ago all who wished to be considered as belong-

ing to the Church at all, that is, all who in any sense avowed belief in Christianity, accepted the Bible as of unique if not ultimate religious authority. It is not so now, for many who profess and call themselves Christians are entirely free to reject, without explanation or apology, any and every teaching of Scripture which appears to them incredible or unworthy. That a thought appears in the Bible vests it with not a whit more authority than it would naturally carry wherever found. The words of Jesus, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," win no quicker, surer response than the speech of Portia in Shakspeare's trial scene. When Socrates affirms that no harm can befall a good man in life or in death, his testimony is as convincing to them as the 91st Psalm or the swan song of Paul. And since judgment has begun thus at the house of God, it would be strange if the difference were not even more marked outside. It is highly significant that no scientific investigator to-day deems it incumbent upon him to square his results to Biblical lines before reckoning them valid to himself or publishing them to the world. Formerly the effort was to conform geology to Genesis; now the endeavor is, wherever made at all, to reconcile Genesis to geology. Almost imperceptibly, presuppositions have altered; once the priest burned the scholar, now the scholar "roasts" the priest who becomes worthy of the merry attention, and if a conflict is thought to exist between science and religion, it is not the former that is put on the defensive. No student of science in these days defers in the slightest degree to even the plainest teachings of Scripture concerning a subject which he is investigating. What ethical scholar now seeks to determine the Biblical conceptions of conscience, the

will, righteousness or sin, by way of guide or check to his own conclusions? Biblical authority has absolutely no standing before intellectual tribunals. In popular estimation, the change is even more marked, and excites grave regret among those who have learned to appreciate the solid and permanent worth of the Biblical literature. A revulsion from unwarrantable claims put forth in behalf of the Bible by its thoughtless friends is culminating in an undue disregard of it: the dilemma arrogantly proposed of the whole Bible or no Bible has been tacitly accepted by the popular judgment, and the latter alternative chosen. The result is grievous; this splendid Hebrew literature, which need not fear comparison with that of any other nation, ancient or modern, which has been the inspiration of the noblest art, music, poetry, and character of Christendom, which has fortified sinking hearts and consoled the sorrowing, is often treated flippantly, and even disdainfully. Yet this attitude toward the Bible can be only temporary, for the calumniated higher critics have already enabled those who would listen, and all will ultimately give ear, to see in the Hebrew Scriptures not only a rich field for historical study and an unparalleled handbook for the study of religious evolution, but also a noble and uplifting literature, an indispensable instrument of the higher culture. Strip the king of his regal robes and royal authority, and the man alone is left, but to those who love him, and know him worthy to be loved, the man is more than the monarch. The critical task of the century has been to show the Bible human, that it may exercise authority not by divine prerogative, but by human helpfulness. Now the great body of Christians, even while disavowing the labors of the critics and repudiating with scorn their conclusions, have

been unconsciously changing front with regard to the Scriptures. With but a few notorious exceptions, the great preachers of Christendom appeal directly to the reason and conscience of their hearers ; their sermons are not heavily forced with proof texts, and the Bible is more often used to point a moral or adorn a tale than to establish dogmatic conclusions. Its value is said to lie in the distinctness with which it sets forth the thoughts and emotions natural to the human heart, which, the instant they are clearly expressed, as in the Bible, commend themselves as authoritative ideals. Some are even asking themselves whether, if the Bible be exceptionally divine, it will not reveal its sacred character and unfold its treasures more fully the more critically it is studied, and, on the other hand, if it be a purely human book, with human limitations, whether there may not be impiety in ascribing to the absolute wisdom and goodness the thoughts and deeds of fallible men.

While, therefore, the Church may formally deny that its opinion of the Bible has altered, the fact is obvious that we have all been moving, and moving in the right direction—only, as was said once of Joseph Cook, some are “ marching backward and crying halt ”!

Our special purpose this morning is to indicate the ways by which this change has been coming about and, incidentally, by way of criticism upon present methods, to indicate its future course and final outcome. Obviously it is a large stint and not to be done thoroughly in the allotted time. Naturally we must ignore such general causes as dislike for all external authority whatsoever, growing confidence in the natural human powers as witnesses to truth, and the diffusion of a scientific temper and habit of mind ; yet,

after all, these have not been so effectual as the work that has been done within the compass of the book itself. Biblical research has been the chief agency in undermining the old-time Biblical authority and humanizing the Scriptures. There is a curious indication of this furnished by the Letter to French Philosophers, in which Priestley squarely met the decisive argument against miracles by asserting that to deem our Biblical informants mistaken *does* presuppose a greater miracle than the occurrences they relate, for (he goes on to say) "it is as certain that the books of Moses were written, and published to the whole of the Hebrew nation in his life-time, and the history of the evangelist and the Acts of the Apostles in the age in which the transactions were recent, as that the histories of Thucydides and Tacitus were written and published in the same circumstances." That no writer of Priestley's eminence, however strenuous a defender of miracles, would now venture to put his argument in precisely that form is due not so much to the general presuppositions of enlarged intelligence as to the particular results of Biblical criticism. Beyond this narrow, yet most significant field, therefore, we need not stray, and even within its limits it would be hardly practicable to crowd the events of a century into an hour. Moreover, there has been no definite succession of events by reciting which one may unroll the panorama of progress. Advances of knowledge are not plainly marked by time-posts or by the plus signs of mechanical addition. Logical order is not identical with chronological succession. Let it be frankly confessed, then, that our treatment of the subject proposed is narrow, fragmentary, and somewhat artificial in arrangement: Many important names will not even

be mentioned, and no attempt will be made to describe exhaustively the contribution of any one scholar to Biblical science. The utmost that we shall endeavor will be to sketch some of the lines along which the criticism of the century has affected the idea of Biblical authority.

Precisely at the beginning of the period to be considered we meet the name of John Jacob Griesbach, who, in 1796, published the first volume of his second and principal edition of the Greek New Testament. He may fitly stand as representative of that noble army of scholars who by their unwearying efforts to restore the original words of the New Testament, have succeeded in breaking forever the claim of textual infallibility, the more fitly because in his (rebellious) dependence upon the so-called Received Text, he stands virtually at the end of one epoch, while in his use of the family principle in classifying and estimating manuscripts he anticipates another. Up to the time of Lachmann, in 1831, who set the precedent followed by all great editors since, of cutting loose entirely from the printed text and relying solely upon the testimony of manuscripts, versions and Fathers, every edition of the New Testament (if we except the comparatively small group based upon the Complutensian Polyglot) was determined more or less directly, but always unduly, by the Erasmus text of 1516. Yet the edition for which such vast claims of settlers' rights were set up, and upheld so tenaciously, is what, in Western parlance, would be called a "Sooner." It was a bookmaker's venture, thrown out rather than brought out (to translate Erasmus' own description of it) for the purpose of forestalling the Complutensian Polyglot, printed (the New Testa-

ment portion of it) in 1514, but not sanctioned until 1520, and apparently not on the market before 1522. The manuscript which Erasmus used for printer's copy in Gospels, Acts and Epistles, was a late and comparatively worthless cursive, which he amended arbitrarily by the aid of others, belonging, with a single exception, to the same class. In the Apocalypse he had but one manuscript, a gap in which was filled by a translation into Greek from the Vulgate, made by Erasmus himself. For subsequent editions of Erasmus, for those of Stephens, Beza and the Elzevirs, other manuscripts became available, but very few of them were precious, and the principles of scientific criticism were as yet unformulated. The enormous labors of Ussher and Walton, Mill, Bentley and Wetstein, put Griesbach into possession of a vast amount of material, increased also by his own exertions, which, however, stood in urgent need of systematic treatment. Proceeding upon a suggestion thrown out by Bengel, Griesbach divided his sources into three groups, representing different types of text, which he called the Constantinopolitan, the Western, the Alexandrian, and by the mouth of any two witnesses, but more particularly the Western and Alexandrian, a reading was decided. He was greatly hampered, however, by bondage to the Received Text, and his theory had but slight influence in New Testament criticism until revived by Westcott and Hort. Meanwhile, the material increased at a prodigious rate. Within the century *Aleph* has been discovered ; many manuscripts, known only in selected readings or by partial and inaccurate collations, have been fully and carefully edited ; versions, especially the Syriac and Old Latin, have been critically studied ; the works of the Fathers have been

ransacked with indefatigable and punctilious zeal, until now the task of a textual critic has become simply stupendous. The gain in manuscript testimony alone may be estimated by Mitchell's statement that the researches of the last fifteen years, from 1880 to 1895, have more than doubled the number of known manuscripts. There are now said to be about three thousand six hundred, of which perhaps one hundred are uncials, and even while this paper was preparing news came of the finding of a manuscript dated, it is said, from the sixth century, and (apparently) the source of the stray leaves known as the Codex Purpureus, authoritatively collated by Tischendorf, and published by him in 1846. Of course, the bulk of these manuscripts are of no critical importance—the democratic idea of one manuscript one vote was discarded long ago—many of them are but fragments, some very small fragments, and by the accepted method of enumeration the same manuscript may be counted more than once, yet after due allowances are made, the number of manuscripts remains extraordinarily large, and the critical problem is correspondingly aggravated. The latest critical edition, that of Westcott and Hort, is distinguished by devotion to a theory concerning the history of the New Testament text, of which Dr. Hort has given so exact and concise a statement that his own words must be quoted: “Early in the second century we find the Western text already wandering into greater and greater adulteration of the apostolic text, which, while doubtless holding its ground in different places, has its securest refuge at Alexandria; but there, in turn, it suffers from another, but slighter, series of changes: and all this before the middle of the third century. At no long time after we find an attempt made, apparently

at Antioch, to remedy the growing confusion of texts by the editing of an eclectic text combining readings from the three principal texts, itself further revised on like principles, and in that form used by great Antiochian theologians not long after the middle of the fourth century. From that date, and indeed earlier, we find a chaos of varying mixed texts, in which, as time advances, the elder texts recede, and the Antiochian text now established at Constantinople increasingly prevails. Then even the later types with mixed base disappear, and with the rarest exceptions the Constantinopolitan text alone is copied, often at first with relics of its vanquished rivals included, till at last these too dwindle, and in the copies written shortly before the invention of printing its victory is all but complete. At each stage there are irregularities and obscurities: but we believe the above to be a true sketch of the leading incidents in the history of the text of the New Testament, and if it be true, its significance as a key to the complexities of documentary evidence is patent without explanation."

From this it is evident that Westcott and Hort recognize four families or groups—the Syrian, the Alexandrian, the Western, and the Pre-Syrian which approaches most nearly the Apostolic originals. Of these, all distinctively Syrian witnesses are to be instantly discarded; that is, according to Scrivener's computation, nineteen-twentieths of all our critical materials are put out of evidence by a single ruling. Of the Neutral text, Aleph and B are the sole representatives, and of these B is the more authoritative. No reading in which these two manuscripts concur can be altogether rejected, and none which lacks the support of at least one of these can be certainly accepted.

It must be acknowledged that this is too strict an application of the Carlyle doctrine to textural criticism, and that the frequent complaints of an almost Papistical allegiance on the part of the learned editors to B ("the voice from the Vatican") are not entirely groundless.

In a debating club of which I was a boyish member we had an "earnest" young man who proposed once that at the next meeting we should debate the following question, stated in his own words: "*Resolved*, Which was the greatest general, Cæsar or Napoleon?" Instantly the wag of the club sprang to his feet and said, "Mr. President, as preliminary to this important question, I move that we discuss the following: '*Resolved*, What difference does it make anyhow?'" Whenever I open Tischendorf's major edition, or review as we have now cursorily reviewed the progress of textual criticism, that question of the debating club comes into my mind. To what purpose is all this expenditure of time and labor? In 1713 Bentley wrote, "The real text of the sacred writers is competently exact in the worst manuscript now extant; nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them. Even put them into the hands of a knave or a fool, and yet with the most sinister and absurd choice he shall not extinguish the light of any one chapter nor so disguise Christianity but that every feature of it will still be the same." In the main, Bentley's confident declaration has been abundantly vindicated. A few proof texts for the doctrine of the Trinity like "The Three Witnesses," 1 Tim. iii, 16 and Acts xx, 28, have been corrected or their argumentative force has been weakened by suspicion, yet these are trifling results, and one can

only marvel at the pulicosity of modern textual criticism. One worthy result, however, has been achieved: Not only has the doctrine of textual authority been demolished, but the dogma of Biblical infallibility has received its death-blow, although, like the beasts in Daniel's vision, its life is still prolonged. It survives gaspingly only in the fantastic contention that anyhow the text of the original autograph was infallible. This is very much as if a philosophical vender of jewelry should argue that even though his trinkets could not meet the acid test, the *ding an sich* of each was pure gold, and challenge proof to the contrary. The chief outcome, then, of the textual criticism of the century has been to establish the fact that the text of the Bible in its transmission from the originals has had a natural history, has been subject to the same laws as all other manuscript documents. Yet it should be observed that all this care and energy are based actually, though unwittingly, upon the rejected notion of a superhuman book, every word of which is divinely precious. As soon as the Bible is confessed to be natural, not supernatural in character, the labors of textual critics will have a speedy end.

In considering questions pertaining to the Biblical text, we have spoken only of the New Testament.

That Old Testament manuscripts also show various readings has long been known, and at about the beginning of our century hopes were entertained that investigation would be as profitable in the case of the Old Testament as it seemed likely to prove in that of the New. But it soon became evident that all the copies are derived from a single archetype which probably represents an authoritative recension. Our

Hebrew text is undeniably corrupt, in many places quite unintelligible, but the manuscripts give little or no help for its improvement; the chief recourse of critics must be to the Septuagint version. Yet, in the department of the higher criticism to which we now turn, the work in the Old Testament has far outstripped that in the New in respect to thoroughness and profitable outcome.

Taking no account, for lack of time, of the progress made in Biblical grammar and lexicography, we come now to speak of what is known as the higher criticism, a science practically contained within the limits of our period. The year 1835 furnishes a convenient grouping point, in which as Pfeiderer has observed Strauss's "Life of Jesus," Baur's "Pastoral Epistles" and Vatke's "History of Old Testament Religion" were published—three works, adds Pfeiderer, containing the germs of the researches of our day into the Old and New Testament writings. It is significant that the authors named were all Germans, since it indicates the source of the chief influences upon Biblical scholarship during the century. Another noteworthy circumstance is that each of these names represents a different mode of approaching the critical problems. Recollecting Maudsley's reiterated warnings against classifying and pigeon-holing where no real discrimination exists, we need not suppose that the differences are radical or that any one author traveled a unique road to the exclusion of all others; nevertheless it will stead us to use them as types of really distinguishable methods.

Strauss advanced by the way of inconsistencies in the Biblical records, and there never has been, nor ever will be, a keener, more masterly dissection than

his of the Gospel narratives. In this method he has for Old Testament associate Colenso, whose criticism revealed inconsistencies in the Pentateuch quite incompatible with the theory of its Mosaic authorship, except in the sense that Burke called the government of England in 1764 a mosaic ministry. Theirs was the straightaway, two-times-two are four, thoroughly English method of attack, with no subtleties or intricacies. Although not previously undiscerned, for the Deists had worn down this road, the incoherences which they pointed out were shown so clearly that they could never henceforth fail to receive proper attention. In the Autumn of 1831, Charles Darwin, in company with Professor Sedgwick, spent many hours looking for fossils in a certain region of North Wales, but neither of us, he says, "saw a trace of the wonderful glacial phenomena all around us—yet these phenomena were so conspicuous that a house burned down by fire did not tell its story more plainly than did this valley." So easy is it to overlook phenomena, however obvious, before they have been pointed out. As one gazes at a picture with hidden faces trying to detect the concealed visages, but in vain, till suddenly the lineaments of a face appear and ever afterwards obtrude themselves upon the attention, so readers, and even students, often glide over the discrepancies in the Scripture narratives, denying their very existence, it may be, until they are once perceived, and then the sense of them is never lost. The permanent merit of Strauss's work lies not in his myth theory, but in the fact that, to borrow Freeland's praise of Luther, he gave the world new eyes to see.

Valid as this method is, however, and notable as are its results, there is serious danger that it may lead

to erroneous inferences, damaging to sound conclusions, because based upon false premises. In the first place, there is a certain critical momentum, against which a student should be forever on his guard. When a document has been detected in one or two errors we are prone to conclude hastily that its testimony everywhere is untrustworthy unless substantiated by other evidence. Or, when we have, as in the case of the Gospels, two narratives of the same event disagreeing in important particulars, there is danger of inferring that the witness of both is invalidated. Too often Strauss plays the Gospels against one another to the discrediting of all. If one calls the chess-board black, another white, it does not follow that there is no chess-board at all. Secondly, it should always be borne in mind that these incompatibilities about which so much is made may be evidence of the existence of different documents much older than the book actually under consideration and incorporated into it. Precisely as the defects of an ancient version considered as a translation are its merits as a witness to the text from which it was made, so the literary faults of an editor, or compiler, in an age when "the only copyright was the right to copy" at discretion, and a quotation from a "quaint old author" added piquancy to the style and edification to the matter, earn our gratitude by enabling us to reconstruct his sources. This documentary hypothesis has been accepted and applied in Pentateuchal criticism much more satisfactorily than in the case of the Gospels, and by its aid some of the most profitable results of modern scholarship have been obtained. The inconsistencies which were a stone of stumbling to the Deists, and to Strauss, whose legitimate successor he was, have become the head of

the corner in later investigations. Thirdly, and inclusively, the force of this method of arguing is weakened by the consideration that we have to do with purely human documents. The contradictions impeach beyond recovery divine infallibility, but they do not seriously impugn human truthfulness and general credibility. A jury would do well to be suspicious if all the testimony in a case dovetailed together, if there were no discrepancies or disagreements, for it would give rise to the suspicion that the witnesses had been tampered with, and their testimony compacted beforehand. In reading Strauss, one feels constantly that he is working from the point of view of infallibility; and that, looked at purely as human records, the Gospels are not so seriously damaged by his criticism. Yet no one after reading Strauss intelligently and with open mind can uphold the unique historical authority of our Gospels; he has demolished the dogma of historical infallibility as effectually as the textual critics have shattered the doctrine of textual inaccuracy, yet the labors of both lose much of their importance when once the purely human character of the records is fully admitted.

The second of the three great names which we grouped about the year 1835 is that of Baur, whose method was more constructive than that of Strauss and resembled that chosen by Kuenen in the Old Testament. One of Priestley's favorite arguments was that the apostolic age is to be interpreted by the sub-apostolic; since, that is, the doctrine of the Trinity does not appear in the historical age of the Church nearest the apostles, it is highly improbable that it was believed in the earlier period that is inscrutable. Baur and Kuenen take substantially the same position. Recog-

nizing the uncertainty which overhangs the period each is studying, both plant themselves at the earliest moment of comparative certainty, Baur upon the (then) undoubted epistles of Paul, Kuenen upon the books of the Prophets, and thence endeavor to reconstruct the preceding age. Finding that in Galatians, Paul appears as an uncompromising opponent to Peter, Baur concludes that the most important characteristic of the apostolic age was a controversy between Paul and Peter as to the universality of the Gospel, that this debate had its ardent champions on either side for long after the great protagonists were dead, and that there were also mediators between the two parties, all of whom have left records of their literary activity in our New Testament documents. Similarly, Kuenen, noticing that in the earliest writing prophets' there were no traces of the complete Levitical legislation ascribed to Moses, but, on the contrary, that there was much inconsistent with the existence of such a divine revelation, and observing also that in the earlier Old Testament writings there were traces of documents chronicling both the priestly and the prophetic view of the earlier history, made a complete reconstruction of the history of Israel. Each of these names, it must again be repeated, is representative of a school, or system of thought, in which are countless minor divergencies and hypotheses, too many and elaborate even to be mentioned.

In regard to this method as it is actually applied by many disciples of the school, and even by the masters themselves, a caution must be spoken. It is never safe to conclude that ignorance of a document or usage proves its non-existence. There is a scene in English annals which reminds us forcibly of another in Jewish

history. On the 24th of August, in the year 1214, at a meeting of the barons of England, held in St. Paul's Church, London, Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, produced a venerable document, the charter granted by Henry I, over a century earlier, which formally secured to the people of England the rights for which they were then contending with King John. Yet this important charter seems to have been entirely forgotten till it was unearthed by Stephen Langton. I would not be understood as arguing that the document found by Hilkiah in the Temple was really an ancient and genuine roll, for cumulative evidence appears to be decisive against such a supposition, but only that the argument from silence and apparent ignorance must be used with exceeding care. Because another king arose which knew not Joseph it need not be inferred that Joseph never existed.

Secondly, it should not be forgotten that men are often inconsistent, and that extreme moods must not be given undue prominence. To take a crucial instance, when Baur urges that Acts cannot be authentic since its Paul is totally unlike the Paul of Galatians, one may assent at this conclusion on other grounds while demurring at this particular argument. For in the Galatians Paul, always impulsive and subject to great fluctuations of feeling, was in a very extreme mood, as, indeed, his other epistles prove, and from the character of the man, as it may be gathered from his genuine letters, it is not at all improbable that the inconsistencies ascribed to him in Acts are perfectly authentic. The chief result attained, then, by this method is the certainty that in the creation of our documents human prejudices and tendencies of "schools" have been operative; yet, in the use

of this, as in the method previously described, critics have often gone astray because they have proceeded tacitly on the assumption that they were dealing with documents and personages of more than human consistency.

Still a third way of approach was that taken by Vatke, whose introduction to the history of Old Testament religion was a dissertation upon the philosophy of religion and the laws of its development based chiefly upon Hegel. He approaches the Old Testament with certain philosophical presuppositions which to a degree controlled his historical criticisms. Perhaps the closest likeness to this school in the case of the New Testament is found among the modern Christo-centric theorists, but the method has such vogue among Biblical students that its limitations should be pointed out. It is Darwin rather than Hegel who has made the idea of "the process" current coin, and he seems to have feared that his theory would suffer most from its friends who, failing to comprehend its scope and requirements, would apply it extravagantly. His fears have been justified by experience. All the facts of Biblical history must be fitted into a grand scheme of progressive revelation in which forms rise in regular succession through all the phases of growth. There are to be no backslidings, no spurts of genius which for a moment possess ground that cannot be held; everywhere there must be an orderly process, pushing ever upwards. This theory has done harm to Biblical criticism. As applied to the Old Testament it stumbles, so it seems to me, upon the fact that Amos, first of the writing prophets, a herdman and dresser of sycamore trees, reaches almost the high-water mark in Old Testament diction and religious thought. It

contributes to the multiplication of redactors and editors who appear like veritable *Dei ex machina* when the argument gets thick to help out of the tangle. It seems actually as if the critics invented redactors with all the joyous abandon of the older science when it created epicycles on demand, and angels to trundle the stars along appointed ways. It brings discordant facts under the blind spot of the mind's eye and makes adaptiveness to a theory a factor in critical study. The parable of Jesus holds intellectually: no good mental shepherd will be content with the ninety and nine facts snugly ensconced in the fold of his theory while one stray fact is outside its boundaries. While, then, this method has established beyond cavil the possibility and hence the practical certainty that the religious life of Israel had an orderly growth in obedience to universal laws of religious evolution, it has injured its own case by the unnatural rigor with which it has endeavored to compress the facts into the mould of its theory, and so, here again, our criticism is against the assumption that the historical events or the revelation had unnatural orderliness of sequence.

There is a fourth method, which has not yet been admitted into good and regular standing even by Biblical critics of the free school, but which, nevertheless, has steadily won its place, and is now taking up the methods already described into its co-ordinating service, freeing them from the objections just advanced, and hence adding to the certainty of their results. To ally it with contemporary intellectual movements, we may call this the comparative method. The revolution wrought in all science by the introduction of this method is familiar to us. Whereas the anatomist used to be satisfied with merely describing the human

structure, the comparative anatomist sets it beside the structure of other animals, explains the significance of its parts and traces its development. Likewise the religious teacher was content to expound the traditional system entrusted to him, to articulate it as best he could into a connected whole, and treat all other systems as beneath his notice. But the modern student of religion scrutinizes all phases of belief from the very lowest up, traces genetically the rise of articles of faith, and, by comparing system with system, strives to demonstrate the fitness of religion to individual and social peculiarities and to the universal need of man. Evolution is the popular catch-word, but *comparative* is the student's open sesame. Now, in relation to Biblical criticism, this method proceeds along three lines, sometimes checking the results obtained by the other methods, but more often confirming them: these three lines are, literary, archæological, humanistic.

Matthew Arnold's standing indictment against the Biblical critics was that they failed to rate at its proper value the loose and flowing style of the Scriptures, but strove to cramp their bold, free utterances into metaphysical formulæ. It is equally true that the higher critics have set too rigorous a standard for the testing of Biblical documents. They have made too much of anachronisms, blunders in chronology and numbers, manifest inconsistencies and incredible narratives, and therefore they have quite unduly depreciated the documents in which these occur. There has recently been published a book by Dr. Franklin Johnson, of the University of Chicago, upon the subject of quotations from the Old Testament in the New, in which the author compares the Scriptural quotations

with those made from secular authors by standard writers, and shows that errors in the one class are matched by similar errors in the other. The method is undoubtedly sound, and needs to be extended through the entire range of Biblical criticism. In the words of Prof. Sayce: "The apologist showed himself only too ready to rival the 'higher critic' in demanding from the Biblical writers a mathematical accuracy of expression, and, in order to support his views, had recourse to arguments which sinned against the first principles of common sense. They were, at all events, arguments which would not have been admitted in the case of any other literature. The higher critic and the apologist alike obscured the main point at issue by a microscopic attention to unimportant particulars, the one maintaining that small errors of detail were sufficient to cast doubt on the credibility of an historical narrative or to determine its age and character; the other that equally small matters of detail could be proved to be in accordance with the latest hypotheses of science." When the Hebrew and early Christian literature shall take its place among the literatures of the earth, read in the same spirit and judged by the same canons, a great deal of modern criticism will seem but learned trifling.

In respect to Archæology, the comparative method has established itself most firmly. Prof. Sayce, from whom I just quoted, is to-day one of the foremost English workers in this field, and his charge against the higher criticism is strong and, as it seems to me, in the main, convincing. When, however, men of the conservative school welcome him gleefully as an ally, they are guilty of a blunder as fatal as that which led Ahaz to invite Tiglath Pileser to assist him against the

Syrians, or the Britons to seek the aid of the Jutes against the Picts. For Prof. Sayce is uncompromising in his acceptance of the fundamental principles of the higher criticism, claiming only that its view has been too narrow. One of the April magazines reported an interview with Prof. Roentgen, in which was a sentence worthy to be graven in letters of gold. After the professor had described the appearance of the tell-tale fluorescence, the reporter asked: "What did you think?" "I did not think," was the reply, "I investigated." In Prof. Sayce's opinion there has been too much thinking and not enough investigating in hopeful directions on the part of the critics. It will not do to reason that because the Iliad is Homeric only in the suggestion of patchwork, therefore Agamemnon and the Trojan war are myths. Some Assyriologists and Egyptologists affirm that the critics have been overhasty in their condemnation, that recent discoveries tend to show substantial veracity in the historical narratives of the Old Testament altogether aside from questions of date and authorship. A document may be authentic without being genuine. It is true that in reading Sayce, for instance, one recalls Sir Thomas Browne's remark about those who "find it easier to believe when they behold the sepulchre, and having seen the Red Sea make no doubt of the miracle," yet it is certain that he has touched a weak point in current critical methods and shown a more excellent way.

Researches of a similar character are tending to modify our judgments in respect to certain of the New Testament books. The investigations by Prof. Ramsay in Asia Minor cannot but affect our opinion as to the Acts, the discovery of Tatian's Diatessaron has made possible a much earlier date for the Fourth Gos-

pel than has frequently been ascribed to it. Robertson Smith's study of Semitic institutions has thrown a flood of light on many Old Testament passages. And so in many ways the union of the comparative method with archæological results promises much for the future of Biblical science. Certainly it has already modified unfavorable judgments pronounced upon the records when viewed as "single instances."

The third line along which the comparative method must develop I have called with some misgiving the human, or humanistic. Perhaps I can explain my thought best by contrasting Channing's view of Jesus with that held by many among us to-day. In a discourse delivered seventy-five years ago upon "The Evidences of Revealed Religion," Channing said: "How is this [the character of Jesus Christ] to be explained by the principles of human nature? We are immediately struck with this peculiarity in the author of Christianity, that whilst all other men are formed in a measure by the spirit of the age, we can discover in Jesus no impression of the period in which he lived. We know with considerable accuracy the state of society, the modes of thinking, the hopes and expectations of the country in which Jesus was born and grew up, and he is free from them, and exalted above them, as if he had lived in another world, or with every sense shut on the objects around him. His character has in it nothing local or temporary. It can be explained by nothing around him." Our surprise at Channing's utterance marks the advance of three-quarters of a century. Once Jesus was conceived of as an isolated peak, soaring into infinite heights from a surrounding dead-level. But we have learned that some of the sublimest products of the Jewish religious genius must

be dated within "the four centuries of silence;" that besides the dry-as-dust Phariseeism with which the Gospels have made us familiar, there was also, at the time of Jesus, a revival of the ancient prophetic spirit in Israel, of which John was the first, as Jesus has become the most conspicuous, representative. He did not stand alone: He was not out of touch with His age. Enlarged acquaintance with the times of Jesus, due to the labors of such men as Lightfoot, Wetstein, Schürer, Weber, and others, has proved conclusively that Jesus was affected by His age. More than this, the Messianic dream of his contemporaries was his also, and under the power of that tragic delusion, believing the mission of the Messiah to be two-fold, a first coming in humility and weakness, terminated by a sacrificial death, and followed within the generation by another coming in power and great glory, Jesus gave Himself up to the horror of the cross. By conceiving of Jesus as lifted, perforce, above the limitations of His age, idealizing Him in wisdom and universal sympathy beyond the warrant of the Gospels as we have them, critics turned back upon the records and impugned their trustworthiness because the Jesus of their own ideal was not presented there. Jesus did not come a second time within the generation; therefore, He cannot have said He would, and the promises of the second advent must have been falsely ascribed to Him by the expectation of His disciples. Jesus, with His spiritual perceptions, cannot have fallen in with the current idea of a temporal Messiah, cannot, indeed, have believed Himself the Messiah at all, therefore all passages which represent Him as holding the idea must be late interpolations due to the reflection of subsequent ages, and unworthily attributed to Him. Similarly with Paul, he

must always have been spiritual and self-consistent, hence records which show him vacillating and temporizing must be condemned as not authentic. It is impossible to estimate the influence upon Biblical criticism in the New Testament by this habit of dehumanizing its heroes and then depreciating the record whose pictures fall below the ideal. Evidently the true way is, to take the accounts we have, construct from them the man whose life they purport to chronicle, compare that picture with what we know of human nature, and if it seem a human life, accept it as a true picture, drawing from it what strength and inspiration we may, instead of fashioning out of our devout imaginings the manner of man we would like Jesus or Paul to have been, and then vilifying the records which do not warrant our dream. With regard to New Testament heroes as to Biblical records in general, back of a vast amount of destructive criticism lies the unchallenged, perhaps unconscious, presupposition of superhuman worth and greatness. Looked at from a purely human, absolutely natural, point of view, many of the conclusions of the higher criticism seem to be untenable, and the records rise in literary and historical value. The comparative method combines with those previously described in taking away the last vestige of superhuman authority, but checks their tendency to undervalue our documents considered as purely human productions.

It must already have become apparent why this paper has taken precisely the course it has, and why no attempt has been made to state the assured gains in Biblical knowledge won during a century of critical exploration. It has been shown that the text of the Bible has a natural history, that its narratives present

historical inaccuracies like those common in all early attempts at the writing of history and exactly such prejudices on the part of the authors as might be looked for in an age of fierce debate ; and finally, that the history of Israel, with the life of Israel's greatest prophet, conforms to the natural process of development. Hence, it is inevitable to conclude that the Bible is a purely human book, and as soon as this point of view is fully won and firmly held we are able to criticise the critics as not sufficiently thorough-going because influenced more than they are aware by the discarded theory as to the nature of the Bible ; and, of even more importance, all concrete results suddenly shrink in value. It is not, therefore, because all critical claims are still in court, nor is it merely because the things most commonly believed among the critics have been recently tabulated by more competent authority, but because these are only counters of the game, the most important outcome of which lies in the very methods and premises of which we have been speaking. Hence, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that such questions have for us now, as prime result of this canvassing, only a literary or archæological interest. The authorship of the Fourth Gospel has no more to do with religion than that of the letters of Junius ; as our delight in Macbeth would not be diminished were Bacon proved its author, so the helpfulness of the Gospels for reproof, for doctrine, for instruction and inspiration in righteousness, is totally independent of outstanding questions relating to date and authorship. These are fascinating problems, so fascinating that as, according to Kipling, there is an odor of the Himalayas which once it gets into a man's blood never leaves him, but infallibly brings him back

to the mountains to die, so one who has ever caught the scent of these Biblical questions feels the beagle stir within him whenever one of them crosses his path. Should our earthly dreams prove true, and in some unseen world Socrates have his coveted opportunity to converse with the true and good who have gone before, there are some who would be disquieted even in Paradise till they had hunted up Paul and Luke and John and settled forever the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, Acts and the Fourth Gospel. Yet the interest is purely historical, absolutely without significance for the religious life. The gain of the century lies in the shifted point of view and the different methods employed. Since in intellectual combats it is the challenger, not the challenged, who chooses the ground and picks the weapons, those who oppose critical results have been forced to occupy their adversaries' point of view and accept their methods. So even while contending against the results they have confirmed the far more radical and important premises.

Has this altered conception of the Bible from a peculiarly divine to a perfectly human book been a gain or a loss? To part with a unique if not infallible authority in matters of religion is a loss great and undisguisable. In all the wanderings of human thought, the uncertainty that always overhangs our best intellectual efforts, the frost of experience that nips our budding hopes and aspirations, it was good to believe that we had at hand an infallible guide upon which we could confidently rely. The great promises of the Bible, its shepherd who neither slumbers nor sleeps, the everlasting arms underneath our weakness and ignorance, the glories passing all splendor seen by mortal eyes, heard by mortal ears, or guessed by

human hearts, prepared for those who come up out of the great tribulation, and from whose eyes the pitying Father wipes away all tears of bereavement and pain—it was blessed to feel that these were not mere expressions of human desire, but were direct certain revelations made to our struggling race by the loving kindness of God. True, there were difficulties, but in practice they were quietly ignored: the imprecatory Psalms did not mar for us the sublimity of “Father, forgive them,” and the massacre after Elijah’s triumph on Carmel did not obscure the radiance of self-sacrificing love that streamed from Calvary; in a vague way we felt that these dark passages were like dens and caves of the earth, designed undoubtedly for some wise and kindly purpose, but not for the habitation of men who might see the face of the Sun and feel the caller air. But there came a time when these difficulties could no longer be evaded, and then the easy yoke which had made our daily burden light became like a millstone crushing us to earth. It became evident that unless we would dishonor God, the Bible must be regarded as infallible only in spots, and the selection of the spots depended upon the preferences of individuals. It is pitiful to watch the efforts put forth by preachers too familiar with the methods of Biblical criticism to ignore them, yet too fond of Biblical authority to relinquish it, in the vain hope of saving supernatural authority for what they like in the Bible while dismissing the remainder as merely local, temporary, human. There are phrases which give precarious refuge for a time. We hear much about the kernel and the husk, as if God had bestowed upon us certain kernels of absolute truth for which men had hunted up protecting husks, whereas in nature kernel and husk

develop together, and not in their separateness, but in their union embody the divine idea. Can we distinguish sharply between spirit and form as if it were possible to extract the soul of a plant to become seed for the sower and bread for the eater? Does it really help to say that the Bible is "not a revelation, but a record of a revelation," "contains but is not the Word of God," and yield ourselves to a foaming spate of muddy words, frothy with rhetoric? One might be able to discriminate, as the prophet did between the Hebrew nation and the true Israel which it contained, but how in the case of the Bible can we draw the mystic line between what is human, what divine, with such precision as to claim only natural authority for the one and independent divine authority for the other? Can it be anything else than an arbitrary division between what seems to us true and what seems to us false, and then, by what right can we claim the authority of God in judgment? A much more enticing device is to juggle the words divine and human by asserting that the divine is divine because perfectly human, and thus attempting in Newman's phrase to "steer through the channel of no-meaning between the Scylla and Charybdis of yes and no." It is futile to raise false issues based upon verbal quibbles, to apply the term human, in the larger sense, to the Bible or to Jesus when nature and origin are in question, and then to substitute divine with its ancient and unique implication when authority is at stake. If the Bible is human as Shakspeare is human, is Hamlet divine as the Bible is divine? The real question, no longer to be evaded with honor, is whether the Bible belongs to a category by itself or is to be classed among the noblest issues of human genius, to be read in the same spirit and

criticized with the same freedom and by the same caucus as the Iliad, the Upanishads and the Divine Comedy. When tricky phrases fail, recourse is often had to forced interpretations wherein, as Lichtenberger says of Schleiermacher, "text is only a pretext," to "rationalism," that pious twin to a Deistic Esau, or to allegory which drops a human ideal into the slot of a Bible text and forthwith by deft hocus-pocus pulls out a divine revelation. So Taylor says of the Puritan divines prior to Locke that every passage of Scripture was to them as a voice from Heaven, speaking directly to the soul, and they interpreted it "by the feelings which it spontaneously awakened." But not thus can edifying interpretation oust honest exegesis.

No, no; all these endeavors are whimsical and deceptive; they cannot keep the old time authority, and they block the new inspiration. As one watches the antics of those who, in the vigorous Bible phrase, are "hopping between two opinions" of religion in general and the Bible in particular, he is irresistibly reminded of the lines in Lowell's "Courtin":

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
 Then stood a spell on t'other;
 An' on which one he felt the wust
 He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

There is nothing for it now but to face the issue manfully and take the Bible as purely human literature, full of sublime thought and holy feeling, instinct with human life, possessing no authority beyond that which its teachings intrinsically exercise upon reason and conscience, and let the full inspiration and helpfulness of this new Bible be ours. There was power in

the old conception, there is equal power in the new, but they who would hold both get the benefit of neither.

What, then, is the advantage of the new Bible? It is something to be delivered from the necessity of striving to reconcile the imperfect and immature ethical perceptions of an ancient people with our ideal of a wise and holy God. But if it is a relief to know that the Bible's lowest is not divine, it is a marvelous inspiration to be sure that its highest is entirely human. There hath not passed away a glory from the earth, but, instead, earth has fallen heir to a magnificent aureole once deemed too sublime for its crowning. If religion is natural, nature hath annexed a new domain infinitely richer than all her previous possessions: if the Bible is a human book, then by its grandeur is our humanity exalted. Its words of consolation and strength, its clarion summons to duty and confident assurances of ultimate victory, register the convictions of men who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, knew, like us, the fearful struggle with doubt and sin and fear, and from the heights of vision which they have attained assure us who toil and stumble on the rugged mountain side that we shall one day see as they have seen, and triumph as they have triumphed. Furthermore, with an inspiration far beyond that of their authors, all Bible pages thrill. For centuries this book has been the comfort of desolate hearts, the strength of those whom it has rallied to battle, the hope and joy of those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death; but it has received from those to whom it has given. As this Church is more to-day than its founders made it, by virtue of the gracious memories and holy associations that cluster about it, so the heroism of saints and martyrs, the devotion of

truth-seekers and brave reformers, and the piety of humble men and women, whose lives have been made brighter and purer by the blessed words, have entered into the Bible and added to its inspiration. We have lost a master, we have gained a friend; and in the future, as in the days that are gone, with ever-increasing power as the years pass, and it gathers inspiration from those whom it inspires, the Bible, in its pure and simple humanity, shall be read and honored, not as having lordship over our faith or reason, but as the friend of our hope and joy.

THEOLOGY OF THE CENTURY

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As laws are silent in the midst of arms, so also is theology. The American followed by the French Revolution, and the critical period which intervened, were too engrossing for theological interests to flourish contemporaneously upon our American soil. But Dr. Samuel Hopkins, who died in 1803, the year of Channing's ordination, had published his most characteristic book in 1773, and for the next quarter of a century had gone on developing that system of theology in which love and terror were so strangely intermixed. Channing, in the interval between his return to Newport from Virginia, in 1800, and his settlement in Boston, saw much of the fine old man, and was much attracted to his doctrine of disinterestedness,—we should be willing to be damned for the glory of God,—and by his anti-slavery arraignment of his Newport parishioners and fellow-citizens. When Channing preached for him, the man of eighty winters told the boy of twenty summers that the hat was not yet finished, and he hoped he would help to finish it. The unfinished hat was a progressive theology, and Channing certainly did something for the widening of its brim. Dr. Hopkins, of whom we commonly think as tightening the screws of the Edwardsean theology, was not without his own heretical possibilities, as where he denied our individual responsibility for Adam's sin, unless we heartily concurred and actively participated in the same. More radical departures from the traditional formulas were Dr. Charles Chauncy's books of

1782 and 1784, vindicating the "Salvation of All Men" as a doctrine of Scripture and reason. It was forty years since he had withstood the Whitefield craze. Yet there was "life in the old dog yet;" and, when the younger Edwards came to the rescue of the imperilled dogma, it was with the clearest consciousness that he must put forth all his strength.

But the heresies of Drs. Hopkins and Chauncy were extremely mild in comparison with others that were in the air a century ago. In 1796 Harvard College presented every student with a copy of Watson's answer to Paine's "Age of Reason," which was published two years before. Watson was Bishop of Llandaff, and one of the most eager and successful place-hunters of his time. To have read his book is to wonder if the college faculty were not in league with Paine, the bishop's answer is such slender stuff. But, of the many written, it was the most popular and plausible; though Priestley's, written at Northumberland, had much more intellectual force and scholarly ability. As was the college, so was the community at large. The testimony of Channing, that "the tendency of all classes was to scepticism," has abundant confirmation. The election of Jefferson in 1800, a freer thinker than the Unitarian John Adams, seemed to mark the victory of Paine's opinions all along the line. They amounted, says Mr. Leslie Stephen, "to a proclamation that the creed no longer satisfied the instincts of rough common sense any more than the intellects of cultivated scholars." But to say that "once and forever it was announced that for the average mass of mankind the old creed was dead" is strangely to mistake a private wish for an accomplished fact. Nothing is surer than that an evangelical reaction

of wide extent and great momentum synchronized with the first and second decades of the nineteenth century. It was this reaction which called a halt to "the silent brotherhood" of anti-Calvinists in the New England Congregational Churches, forced them to show their hand, made it impossible for them to remain any longer in good and regular standing in the orthodox churches, obliged them to form a party by themselves, and name themselves by a distinctive name.

There can be, I suppose, no doubt that any modern Unitarian of good culture and intelligence would find himself in more general agreement with the theology of Paine than with that of Priestley. They had much in common in their scientific ardor; and, though for Paine, at once a skilful mechanician and an enormous egotist, it was a moral and intellectual necessity to believe in a God who was altogether such a one as himself, Priestley's God was, equally with Paine's, an ingenious mechanician, a Being to whom the universe was something as objective as the house to the carpenter who builds it, the watch to its maker. At this point our modern thought, for which God is the indwelling Life, finds Paine and Priestley equally repellent; but, as between Priestley's conception of the soul as a mere function of the bodily organism and Paine's deistic conviction of its natural immortality, all of us who have any faith in immortality would side with Paine. For Priestley there was no personal immortality, except as a miraculous reproduction of the miraculous resurrection of Jesus from the dead, for every soul a special miracle. In critical matters, also, Paine's superiority to Priestley is clear enough. For, though Paine had

not a tithe of Priestley's critical appliances, he had a critical acumen which was much more serviceable. If one must often hold his nose in reading Paine, yet, if he keeps his eyes open, he cannot fail to see that in a rough and brutal way he anticipated many of the sound conclusions of our modern critics. His great defects were, first, his lack of all historic sense,—as if all times were alike,—and, second, his apprehension of the Bible wholly as a mechanism, and not to any degree as an organism, which defect had for its corollary a wholesale accusation of deceit and lying brought against the various writers of the Old Testament and New. But the qualities in which these defects inhered were such as compared more than favorably with Priestley's hard-and-fast conception of the Bible as an authentic history of a supernatural revelation and the clumsy artifices by which he endeavored to save himself from the peculiar straits involved in this conception. Priestley, half scientist and half traditionalist, is very much like Milton's "tawny lion, pawing to get free his hinder parts." The discoverer of oxygen, the restless experimenter in natural science, in his ingenuity and versatility second to none of his contemporaries in things scientific, he nevertheless expected the second coming of Christ within twenty years, and found prophecies of Nelson and Napoleon in the Old Testament, speaks of the New Testament as "the positive word of Him who made man," and asks, "Could it have been by any natural sagacity that Moses predicted the fate of the Israelitish nation to the end of the world?"

But the relative values of Paine and Priestley are not only reversed the moment that we seek to render them in terms of ethical and spiritual personality, but

Priestley's superiority to Paine becomes much more pronounced than Paine's upon the other tack,—more pronounced, if possible, than in matters of pure science. Their political sympathies went out with a rush to meet the French Revolution in its earlier stages, and Paine's "Common Sense" and "Crisis" were an invaluable service to our revolting colonies; but something sordid smirches him at every turn, and his life presents the habitual contradiction of the most dubious personality united with the most brilliant gifts, while Priestley's personality was ever greater than the sum of all his parts. And, if it must be granted that Paine's theological and critical statement was the more coherent and the more prophetic of our later thought, once more we have the lesson that a man's theological formula is no measure of his spiritual force. A more unlovely formula than Priestley's it would be hard to find; and yet we find associated with it a moral character and a piety which impoverish our wealth of praise, the beauty and the tenderness of a religious soul. Thomas Paine had nothing of all this. So well pleased was he with his theistic formula that he returned to it again and again; but, as often as he does so, it is impossible not to feel that he is "dilating with the wrong emotion," that what thrills him is the rhetorical felicity of his own phrases, and not the power, the wisdom and the goodness of the Almighty.

That Priestley should have come to Pennsylvania, and not to Massachusetts, to Philadelphia, and not to Boston, is only strange so long as we do not consider "the lay of the land,"—a phrase to which some people give the "lie," but I do not. Franklin had been four years dead in 1794; but to Priestley I doubt not Phila-

delphia and Pennsylvania were simply his great friend "writ large." In Boston Samuel Adams might have received him kindly, notwithstanding his own Calvinism; but, in general, he could not have been *persona grata* to the Boston liberal Christians, who were as yet no "sect of the imprudents," as the English Unitarians were called, but extremely prudent in their avoidance of things commonly believed by the majority, to which they could assent no longer, and who were, moreover, Federalists almost to a man. Priestley's Jeffersonian politics were even less ingratiating than his Socinian theology. Indeed, it would probably be difficult to overrate the bias of his political reputation as a Red Republican on his theological standing with the Boston liberals. What is certain is that, when these were driven by the Calvinistic reaction of the infant century to come out and declare themselves, their body of theology, as it took form and motion, was something very different from the Socinianism of Priestley and the English Unitarians generally, though with at least one notable exception,—that of Dr. Richard Price.

No personal expression of this difference was more positive than that afforded by William Ellery Channing. It is Martineau who says, "In truth, the English and the American divine represent views of religion as fundamentally opposed as any which can arise within the limits of a common theism." He should have known, for it was to Priestley that he yielded the direction of his early thought. We have another testimony to the same effect, where Coleridge, cordially detesting the Unitarianism of Priestley, expresses the opinion that his own differences from Channing would be found to be not real, but apparent, on close examination. As between the Unitarianism

of Priestley and the Calvinism of his New England contemporaries, it is hardly to be doubted that Channing found the latter more agreeable with his own thought. As Martineau has said, he rather redistributed than abolished the offices of the Son and Holy Spirit. His God, the Father, was not the awful God which Calvinism saw in the first person of the Trinity; but he took up into Himself all of those lovely and beseeching attributes with which Calvinism had invested the Son and the Holy Spirit, which had been the real objects of the Calvinist's religious worship, and which had saved him from the horror and despair which the unqualified impression of his God, the Father, would have engendered in his mind and heart. Channing's whole system of theology, in so far as it had reality and power, was simply the expression of a moral nature and enthusiasm as profound as any which the riches of the world can show. In both Man and God he found free moral agents; their minds, as he said, of one family; and he held them both accountable to his loftiest ideals of truth and love. But the whole genesis and exodus of Priestley's God were different from Channing's. Their genesis was intellectual, and their exodus was scientific. And what he arrived at was a God who was the physical First Cause of all subordinate creatures, all of which in their turn are physical and nothing more, and all their actions are the automatism of his infinite will. They have no moral freedom, no natural immortality. That Calvinism was, for Channing, a better scheme than this, in that it was "set," as Martineau has put it, on the principle of human free-will, even if it was "solved" on that of the divine absolutism, I must presume to doubt. Freedom, lapsing into necessity

with the first temptation of the "grand old gardener and his wife," was a fiction too inappreciably different from necessity, first, last, and always, to stir the mind of Channing with the slightest ripple of a preference. Both Calvinism and Priestleyism must have been equally abhorrent to him, as equally denying the moral freedom of the individual here and now. But that, in Priestley's scheme, the Holy Spirit did not even "lag superfluous on the stage," but left it altogether, while Jesus lingered, not as "the express image of the Father," but as an ambassador entirely human, accredited by certain documents miraculously sealed,—here were, indeed, defects which must have made the Calvinism of Dr. Hopkins' disinterested God and man appear to Channing something more tolerable than the theology of Priestley, however much he might admire his scientific genius and his scholarly acquisitions.

It goes but a little way toward a right understanding of the theology of Channing to say that he was not a Socinian, regarding Jesus as a human being officially exalted to the right hand of God for his distinguished services, but an Arian, regarding Jesus as a being pre-existent, super-angelic, *sui generis*, the Creator of the world and the final Judge of all men. The fact would seem to be that he never held the Arian doctrine very stiffly, and that he approximated more and more closely to the humanitarian thought of Jesus, but not in the good-boy reward-of-merit kind of way of the exact Socinians. He had none of the Calvinistic or Socinian passion for precise definition and a connected system of belief; but, as Martineau has said, "the love of indeterminate and widely suggestive language was an inseparable part of his

religion." Whatever his opinion of the nature of Jesus and his miraculous powers, all that was most impressive in his utterance concerning him was perfectly consistent with his entire humanity. It was not even necessary that his goodness should be perfect in any absolute sense. The great thing was that it forever beckoned from afar, and was forever unattainable by mortal men. So with the atonement. It is undeniable that he was slow to formally abandon everything of the traditional mystery; but it is certain that there was no emphasis on this in his preaching or in his writing, that all the emphasis was on the example and the inspiration afforded by the life and character of Jesus to humanity stumbling and falling on its way to God. Not even Emerson stood for the supremacy of ethics to a degree exceeding Channing, much or little. Even when his theme, in one of the grandest utterances of his life, was "Unitarian Christianity Most Favorable to Piety," the top and crown of his contention was that it was most favorable to morality. The worst thing about the traditional doctrine was not that it dissipated the energy of devotion on a variety of objects, marred the spirituality of God by the intervention of a human image, baffled the imagination with the complexity of a Being three in one and one in three, robbed the Father of every more winning attribute to enrich the Holy Spirit or the Son,—the worst thing was none of these, but that the character of God portrayed by Calvinism *set a bad example* for mankind. Let a human father follow that example, and "we should charge him with a cruelty not surpassed in the annals of the world." There is a fragment of Channing's in which he defines religion as "the worship of goodness," and a definition could not

possibly be framed more consonant with the habitual temper of his mind.

It must not be supposed that, once purged of Unitarian heresy, the Congregational body settled down into a condition of serene content with the faith which had been delivered to the pre-Unitarian saints. Not the most insignificant of Jonathan Edwards' bequests to the New England Congregationalists was his daring speculative disposition and his insistence on a reasonable explanation of the divine revelation; and, when the house of his spiritual progeny was at length divided, not all of this bequest went into Unitarian keeping. The last years of Channing's life were particularly fruitful of theologic change, not only in Congregational, but in Presbyterian circles; and the changes were approximations to the Unitarian standpoint—results in part of the widening "process of the suns," and in part of the unconscious disposition to escape as far as might be from the criticism of the Unitarian theologians. Even before 1830 we find the most accurate statements of Calvinism repudiated as cruel misrepresentations of the current faith. The approximation thus begun has proceeded ever since, and with the inevitable consequence of making thousands well content in the older churches whom a strong insistence on the characteristic doctrines of Calvinism would have sent outside the camp to join the Unitarians and share in their reproach. The main lines of development sixty years ago converged on man's natural ability to repent of sin, the scope of Christ's atonement as general and not special, and on the introduction of moral elements into that doctrine which had before been simply magical.

Simultaneously, the emphasis on faith grew less exclusive, and good works were less frequently denounced as "filthy rags"; and the great salvation was apprehended by the finer spirits as a salvation from sin instead of from its consequences. In the Presbyterian Church the differences on the most technical of these considerations broke up the Plan of Union which had long bound the Presbyterians and Congregationalists together in their Western missionary work, and broke the Presbyterian Church in twain, the New School party establishing the Union Theological Seminary, the Old School Congregationalists having already set up one of their own, the Tylerites against the Taylorites in Connecticut. It was not long, however, before Prof. Tyler had close at hand a heretic in comparison with whom Prof. Taylor was soundly orthodox. The new heretic was Horace Bushnell, unquestionably the most liberating, fertilizing, fructifying mind which we have had within the limits of our evangelical theology. No one took less of counsel with the apostles at Hartford or New Haven, the individuality of his thought being its most conspicuous note; but Jonathan Edwards had been before him in his expansion of the supernatural to a degree that left to miracles a subordinate, if not indifferent, role, and Coleridge and Schleiermacher had furnished more definite anticipations of his thought. In his "Spirit and Dogma" and "Language as related to Thought and Spirit" he reiterated the ideas of Hampden, the Oxford "Noetic" of Whately's coterie and Newman's abomination, and anticipated those of Hatch and Harnack, whereby Jesus and the New Testament

are relieved of all responsibility for the traditional dogmas of the Church. In the "Language related to Thought and Spirit" he anticipated Mr. Balfour's late excursus, "The Foundations of Belief"; but where Mr. Balfour, having shown that Orthodoxy is impossible because the language of the creeds cannot have the same meaning for succeeding generations, or even for different persons, goes on to tell us that we should keep on shouting what we do not mean and do not understand, Bushnell advised a much more honorable course; saying, in effect, The less we have of creeds and systematic theology, the better. Yet, strange to say, we have not had a more scholastic mind than his in our American theology. That his interpretations of trinity and atonement were very different from those commonly accepted meant no approximation to a scientific method. They were attenuations of the traditional theology, ingenious attempts to give that a rational explanation. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were "instrumentally three—three as related to our finite apprehension"; the atonement is "an impression in our minds of the essential sanctity of God's law and character," without which to entertain a sense of the divine forgiveness would be a delusion and a snare. The real work of Bushnell on these lines has been to substitute speculation for dogma in a multitude of minds which have directly and indirectly felt his influence, many other forces—philosophical and personal—contributing to this effect. Of much more importance has been his substitution of the idea of nurture, education, for that of conversion as the true and rational objective of the preacher and the church. The rapid assimilation of this idea by

the Episcopal Church has been one of the most obvious causes of its growth. It is a far cry from this to the Hopkinsian notion that "the means of grace" and the advances in right living are weights to sink us deeper into hell until we have a change of heart.

If the separation of the Unitarian from the Calvinistic churches was not a signal for the latter to think they had already attained, it was still less so in the Unitarian camp. Hardly had the separation been accomplished when there began a process of differentiation in the more liberal body, and a controversy which became violent in "the roaring forties," and after that drew its slow length along for many painful years. The new thought came in on various lines. In the first place, there was the inevitable growth in knowledge of what the Bible *was*, resulting from the patient, loving, reverent study of what it *taught*. At the same time the endeavor to make everything in the Bible as reasonable as possible opened out into a more reasonable conception of its general character. Strangely enough, it was Andrews Norton, whose "Latest Form of Infidelity," replying to Emerson's Divinity School Address of 1838, preserves him like a fly in amber in our cabinet of theological specimens, who was for forty years the leader of our critical advance. Norton, the impassioned leader of the Supernaturalists in 1839, was so far disapproved by Channing in 1819, as one of "the imprudents," that he opposed his elevation to the Dexter Professorship in the Harvard Theological School. But Channing was himself doing quite as much as Norton to lead in the brighter day; and, when he said, "I am more certain that my rational nature is from God than that any

book is the expression of his will," and declared our ultimate reliance to be upon reason, he was a more dangerous radical in the eyes of Norton than Norton ever was in his when following up the lines of Priestley's Biblical investigations. (It was perhaps Norton's lively sympathy with Priestley and the English Unitarians of his school that made him for Channing a suspicious character.) There was much in Channing's fundamental thought, his "one sublime idea" of the dignity of human nature and the grandeur of the human soul, the imitableness of the divine perfection, the *homoiousion*, if not the *homoousion*, of man's intelligence and God's,—“all minds are of one family,”—there was much in these great thoughts that blew the trumpet of a prophecy of the new day of transcendental thought. Indeed, I have sometimes thought that Channing was more naturally a Transcendentalist than Parker, with his passion for facts, his stomach for statistics, his liking for the concrete and tangible.

It is of American theology that I am set to speak ; but any account of American theology which does not reckon with the foreign influences that have entered into it must be utterly inadequate, if not quite untrue. From Coleridge's death, in 1834, until Channing's, in 1841 (Dr. Arnold's was in the same year), there were three great personal forces in English theology—Arnold, Newman, and Carlyle. But Coleridge, though dead, was yet speaking to our cisatlantic fathers more impressively than Arnold or Newman, if we may not add to their names that of Carlyle. German influences, too, were making themselves felt, but these more indirectly, through Coleridge and Carlyle, than directly. It was from Schelling, through Coleridge, that our New England Transcendentalists derived for

the most part what was not indigenous to our soil. In 1835 came Strauss's Life of Jesus, tremendous in its negative criticism of the supernaturalist interpretation of the New Testament, annihilating the naturalism of Paulus, and, if overworking the mythological interpretation, contributing to a just understanding of the New Testament more splendidly than any other critic except Baur; and, indeed, the *tendency* criticism of Baur was nothing but a brilliant illustration of the mythical theory of Strauss,—*i. e.*, of the idealism which either warped the facts of Jesus' life or invented an imaginary element on the slightest verbal provocation. For me to speak of Strauss may possibly subject me to the suspicion of poaching upon Mr. Fenn's preserve; but my concern with him is as the greatest of all those who have helped to make supernaturalism impossible for the more thoughtful people of to-day. Seeing that George Eliot did not translate him until 1846, his readers in America before that were doubtless few; but his fame had gone abroad. Theodore Parker had reviewed him in the *Christian Examiner*, with imperfect apprehension; and he had contributed not a little to the ferment out of which rose the faith in natural religion as beautiful as Venus from the white sea-foam.

Words are such miserable contrivances for the expression of ideas that we find Coleridge, who was one of the principal contributors to this ferment, insisting that there can be no such thing as "natural religion." But his antithesis of natural religion was not supernatural, but spiritual, or, if supernatural, supernatural as meaning spiritual, not sentient, as Priestley had declared. (This use of supernatural, to which Bushnell gave a violent impetus, has been

extremely common in our theological history, and very useful and convenient for those desirous of getting all the salvage possible from the wreck of their traditional belief.) It was from Coleridge, or, rather, *through* Coleridge, that the distinction of the reason from the understanding came into our thought, the former leaping by immediate intuition to the great truths of religion, the latter plodding slowly, pushed *a posteriori*, along the dulness of the inductive path of science. It was his contention that all the truths which are given by revelation can be established by reason and the understanding; and his ingenuity in working out this theory was only equalled by Hegel's find—the Lutheran consubstantiation at the bottom of his well of philosophic truth. In truth, there is no bone that your theologic dog cannot dig up in the Bible if once he buries it there with sufficient care. But what Coleridge did for many minds in England and America was to make fluid many things which had been hard and fixed; and thought once fluid could not run again into the same old channels, shape itself in the traditional moulds. Thus, for both Coleridge and Arnold the depravity of human nature meant the insatiable desire for goodness, “still clutching the inviolable shade”; and Jesus the accredited ambassador of heaven became Jesus the Revelation of the Divine Goodness, and the Bible ceased to be an infallible revelation, and became the human rendering of thoughts supernaturally inspired, and, as a human rendering, subject to errancy. The influence of Arnold on American theology must have been mainly subsequent to his death, and even subsequent to Stanley's admirable biography (1844), which appeared almost simultaneously with that of Blanco White by

Dr. Thom, another liberating book, and one I like to mention here in Philadelphia because Lucretia Mott cared so very much for it, and because she gave it to me as her most precious thing. White's place is high with Coleridge and Arnold and Whately and Hampden as a founder of the Broad Church theology of England; and in America his influence, although impersonal, and so losing much of its attractive force, must have been considerable among the countless forces that have transformed American theology from the mechanism that it was a century ago to the organism that it is to-day.

The influence of Newman upon this theology must have been even less than that of Arnold, whom he could not call a Christian, and who had for all his works and ways a cordial detestation. Newman's was a sacramental theology—a theology which found in the sacraments a magical operation of divine beneficence, an historical theology with limited liability, a certain section of the past being arbitrarily severed from the rest and set up as the orthodox standard. But, later, when this section showed no sign of certain forms and doctrines very essential to the completeness of the Roman system, Newman invented his theory of Doctrinal Development, and found a place in it for everything that required to be accounted for. Still later, in his "Grammar of Assent," elaborating what he had intimated long before, he showed us how much men believe without rational conviction, and then glided tenderly and sweetly into the persuasion that belief without rational conviction is the only possible belief. Hence the necessity for a supernatural authority. The fundamental scepticism of this position, together with its practical inference, has had many

echoes, many variations, in the later course of that development we are considering. Mr. Kidd's "ultra-rational religion" is one. Mr. Balfour's "Foundations of Belief" is another, and one far more impressive. It is doubtful to what extent Newman can be held responsible for this premium upon cowardly surrender and dishonest and unreal ecclesiastical conformity. A doctrine so convenient for those who seek for some excuse for continuing in the old ways, repeating the old forms, enjoying the old, comfortable cushions, would naturally spring up at once in many different places. It is the philosophical formula of that development of intellectual indifference and ecclesiastical unreality which is the most deplorable and threatening aspect of our religious life in this immediate time.

If I were speaking of religion, and not merely of theology, I could be as generous in my praise of Newman's thought as of its perfect form. Not only so; but, as a theologian, he was one of many who have done great things for us in the way of giving us a living God, a present God, in the place of the Divine Absentee of Protestantism, who was last heard from some two thousand years ago. Certainly, if we have an infallible Bible we need an infallible Church for its interpretation; and, if we have not an infallible Bible, and need an infallible revelation, it may well be embodied in a Church and Pope. A living God, forever speaking through his Church, is an immense advance upon God speaking exclusively in the Bible, especially as the Bible cannot be accredited as a supernatural voice. But what Newman's labors, into which many have since entered, have given us here has been an ideal, and not a fact. The Church, even less obvi-

ously than the Bible, has the marks of special inspiration. Ecclesiastes and the imprecatory Psalms are not such staggering phenomena as the forged decretals and Pope Alexander VI. But the more of such, the better ; for so the sooner we escape into the conviction that there is no organ of infallibility, and that the perpetual revelation of the ever-living God is the ever-widening, deepening thought of the progressive manhood of the world.

God in the Church has been a much more rational and inspiring thought than God in the Bible ; but God in humanity, God in the Universe, God in everything, is a much more rational and inspiring thought than God in either Church or Bible, or in both of them together. And sixty years ago it was Thomas Carlyle who proclaimed this gospel in strangely mingled thunderous and æolian tones, which ravished many hearts, while scaring others as if with ominous rumblings of the crack of doom. If theology, to be properly theology, must be systematic, there was little in Carlyle ; but, then, his merit and distinction are that he was one of the most powerful forces tending to bring systematic theology into disrepute. So much was purely negative in form, but not in spirit. The mystery of universal being was too vast for neat expression in thirty-three articles or thirty-nine. Never was thinker more intent upon enlarging God than he. Like Newman, too, he cried out for the living God ; but, unlike Newman, he found him in the daily wonder of the teeming world, not in the special miracle. "Is that a wonder," he asked, "which happens in two hours, and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two millions?" In this fair universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, he saw the star-domed City

of God, and beaming through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every living soul, the glory of a present God. What he did, in short, was to make the natural wonder so great, so beautiful, so infinite, that, in comparison, the supernatural miracle was made insignificant, like Raphael's petty figures when Michael Angelo came and dashed one of his mighty creatures on the wall and went away. Then, too, in the temple of his hero-worship there was a lofty niche for Jesus, the glory of the human shining in his face, and winning every earnest heart.

Of all those in America to whom the message of Carlyle was as a voice from heaven, Emerson heard it with the most serene and perfect joy. His was a much deeper, broader, finer, purer, sweeter, more poetic inspiration than that of the Scotch "trip-hammer with an æolian attachment"; but, as one fig-tree looking upon another fig-tree becometh fruitful, so Emerson, looking on Carlyle, arrived the sooner at that self-expression which has entered so deeply into our religious thinking for the last sixty years. In 1836 appeared two books of natural theology; but how different from the natural theology of Paley, from the ingenious mechanism of the world inferring the divine Artificer! They were written by two lifelong friends. One, called simply "Nature," was by Ralph Waldo Emerson. The other, called "Remarks on the Four Gospels," was by William Henry Furness.

"The silent organ loudest chants
The master's requiem."

The two books were, in reality, but different expressions of a tendency working deeply at the heart of a new time. The theology of Emerson was as little

systematic as that of Carlyle, but so, like that, with set purpose, and with such a sense of the unspeakable wonder and glory of the Infinite as the older theologians had not known with their dissections and their anatomical theology. Here was another prophet of the immanent and present God, the divinity of nature, the unending genesis and abiding revelation, a continuator of Channing's "one sublime idea" of the greatness of the human and of the moral enthusiasm of his life. To him, even if they could be established, the miracles of violated law were cheap, were nothing, in comparison with those of blowing clover and the falling rain. His affirmation, "The Soul knows no persons," might seem to exclude him from the temple of Carlyle's hero-worship; but it did not in reality. It was the affirmation of a truth hardest of all for the Christologist and Jesusite to learn; namely, that the great ethical and spiritual laws transcend all personal illustrations, and make it an impiety to assign to any individual a unique relation to their infinity, even as the breadth and depth and height of universal life and mystery and law make it, for the instructed mind, but little less than blasphemy to identify an historic person, of whatever excellence, with the Eternal God, or even to predicate of such a person a wholly exceptional relation to him who is over all, God blessed forever.

The relation of Dr. Furness to questions of criticism is much more evident than his relation to questions of theology, especially as it is only in the way of temporary concession that a doctrine of Jesus can be considered theological. At this point Dr. Furness was a new humanitarian, the first-born of many brethren, all of them very different from the Socinian

humanitarians, and differing from each other through a wide range. But it was, I think, the happiest coincidence that here in Philadelphia, in the church which Priestley founded, the humanitarian doctrine of Jesus, to which American Unitarianism had been little inclined, should be restated, if not finally, in terms a hundred times more natural and engaging than the Socinian doctrine, and such as appealed to the majority of Unitarians in the mid-course of the century in a most tender and heart-moving fashion. Most serious and important, too, was his defence of the sincerity and spontaneity of the Gospels as against the railing accusations of deliberate fraud brought by the cruder sort, and as against extreme assertions of dogmatic tendency. But the most significant part of Dr. Furness's work was that which steepened the incline down which our Unitarian thought was sliding from a supernaturalist to a purely naturalist account of Christianity. For him and his followers the New Testament miracles, as purely natural transactions, ceased to be evidence for a supernatural Christianity as completely as if all reality whatsoever were denied to them. This was not clearly seen at once by all; but, in the meantime, the predicate "natural" made easier for many the frankest doubt as to the reality of the most wonderful events recorded. Hence, gradually, for many, the assumption, "The less miracles, the better"—a far cry from the persuasion of Sir Thomas Browne that there were "not impossibilities enough in religion for the exercise of an active faith." As time went on, it was inevitable that thinkers should appear appreciating the fact that Dr. Furness's use of the word "natural" was not quite scientific. It meant that the New Testament narratives were internally

congruous, naïve, and also that the wonder-working power of Jesus was but an expression of the universal power of spirit over matter. But "natural," in the language of pure science, means habitual; and, in so far as anything recorded is not habitual, the more evidence must be required for our belief. We have here the attitude of the unqualified scientist toward the supernatural. It has found its best expression of late years in Huxley, willing to grant the possibility of almost every miracle in the New Testament, but not finding for any of them sufficient evidence to warrant our belief.

Theodore Parker expressed this view as clearly as Prof. Huxley; but it was not for doing so that his sermon of May 19, 1841, was anathema to his Unitarian brethren. That sermon did not deny the occurrence of the miracles, only their permanent value as establishing the truth of Christianity. This, as taught by Jesus, shone for him with a convincing light and beauty all its own, while his opponents said: "No; if you believe in the truths which Jesus taught because your own mind and heart respond to them as true and good, you are not a Christian. To be a Christian you must believe these truths because Jesus turned water into wine and multiplied loaves and fishes in a miraculous manner." Here was a materialism made easier by the sensational philosophy of Locke and Hartley, which was generally accepted at the time. Nothing so hurries an advancing column as a brisk fire in front, and Parker arrived at sound conclusions much sooner in the teeth of vigorous opposition than he would otherwise have done. They were, as I have said, the conclusions of Huxley forty years in advance of Huxley's formulation. Antecedently to experience—

this was the doctrine—one thing is as possible as another ; but, the more stable our experience of any kind of thing, the more evidence we must demand for anything affronting this experience. Thus, for example, so few persons have risen from the dead at any time that the evidence for a particular resurrection must be immense, and such we do not find that for the resurrection of Jesus. If it be, as Dr. Lyman Abbott says, the best attested event of ancient history, it is so much the worse for ancient history. The miracle is as little proved as ever. It is not a little wonderful that Parker, a Transcendentalist after the strictest manner of the sect, should have thus placed himself with absolute clearness and simplicity on the scientific ground. From his time to our own, our Unitarian progress has been steadily along the line illuminated by his beacon-light. The great headlands of science, then vague on the horizon, have since loomed up majestic in the morning air. Some, indeed, have steered by the pleasing fiction that the miraculous is the illustration of a higher law than the habitually known ; but so many have been wrecked upon this course that it is getting advertised as dangerous on even theologic charts, and on that of science its name henceforth will be that which Huxley gave it—“pseudo-science.”

However scientific in this one particular, the theology of Parker in general was of Transcendentalism all compact. But it was a Transcendentalism of his own, the convenient formula of his own abounding faith. It would be a great mistake to find in Parker's glorious trinity—God, Immortality, the Moral Law—something assured him by his Transcendental philosophy. His Transcendental theology, which gave to

him his glorious trinity as a fact of consciousness, was nothing but his personal explanation of the spontaneous motions of his believing soul. Denounced as infidel and atheist, he was one of the most robust believers that the world has ever seen. It is impossible not to wonder in what temper he would have met that expansion of the scientific spirit which has been the principal thing with which theology has had to reckon for the last forty years, the main incident of which, the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species," coincided with the close of Parker's life. Holding, as I do, that he was naturally more scientific than philosophical, more inductive than intuitive, I am strongly tempted to believe that he would have been the first among us to appreciate the religious meaning of the new wealth of science. And, oh, the difference to us if he could have lived as long as his dear friend Samuel May, who was born in the same year, and, by the grace of God, is with us still!

I do not know of any landmark which affords a more dramatic illustration of the advance that we have made in half a century than Henry Rogers's "Eclipse of Faith," which in its day was welcomed as a truly splendid vindication of the orthodox faith. Speaking to the imaginary infidel, the author says, "You cannot say that the Bible has not given you every advantage; for never was there a book which more irritates the pride and prejudices of mankind, and presents greater obstacles to its reception morally and intellectually, so that it is among the most unaccountable things, not that it should be rejected by some, but that it should be accepted by any."

"Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love;
But why did you kick me downstairs?"

Here was supernaturalism which not only had no buttered side, but had, instead, a layer, tolerably thick, of a most bitter "medicinal gum." It was a popular presentation; but it was not without abundant philosophical justification in Hamilton and Mansel, with their scheme of theological and moral unreality—Mansel, as Dr. Schurman says, in his happy manner, "poisoning the chalice of natural knowledge, as though by so doing he could commend to us the divine revelation." But this was not the worst. My dear grandmother once gave me a decanter, advising me to fill it with molasses-sweetened water, which, she said, would look like wine, and do me no injury. So Mansel's wine of revelation is no wine at all, but something that looks like it—not truth, but "regulative knowledge," which is all that mortals can expect. Here was the ground for worshipping a Deity whose character, reproduced in human nature, would send a man to the State's prison or make him the scourge and terror of the world. And here, again, was the line of thought which drew from John Stuart Mill that splendid outburst of ethical nobility happily better known than anything else in the wide range of his severely beautiful and impressive contributions to philosophy: "I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that word to my fellow-creatures; and, if such a being can send me to hell for not so calling him, then to hell I will go." But this dazzling headlight must not blind us to the long-drawn train of Mill's influence on the theology of his generation. It made the Transcendental position impossible for many who still could not rest contentedly in his own.

It made the logic of miracle and the supernatural well-nigh impossible for any reader of his books.

Mill was a pre-evolutionist, and it is easy to believe that the doctrine of evolution would have cleared up many things that were dark in his philosophy. Spencer, an evolutionist before Darwin, had the misfortune to inherit from Hamilton and Mansel on the philosophic side. His reconciliation of science and religion was a reconciliation based upon a confession of common ignorance. But the agnosticism is far from absolute which recognizes an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed, and leaves us to infer the nature of the energy from the character of the process and the things. To James Martineau more than to any other are we indebted for the most searching criticism of the nescience of Mansel, the agnosticism of Spencer and his school. It is no great hardship for religion to be assured that an unmanifested Infinite can never be found out, seeing that its manifestations are as thick as snowflakes when the winter storm is whitening all the fields. But Martineau has done another equally important work. He has stood like a great mountain in the pathway of that stream of thought which, rising here in the highlands of philosophy, and there in the broad uplands of science, with convergent force has threatened to destroy the individuality of man and the responsibility of his moral will, and make him a mere factor in the chain of universal physical or spiritual causation. Like a great mountain, Martineau has withstood this stream. Yes; and the mountain has been zoned with fairest verdure, bright with loveliest flowers, its top conversant with the wandering clouds of heaven and the loftiest stars.

Evolution, a doctrine at once scientific and philosophic, which many before Darwin and Spencer were feeling after, if happily they might find it, but to which these two have furnished, one the fullest exposition, and the other the most striking illustration possible, was first flouted passionately by the theologians, and then for several years with lessening violence ; but now, for a long time a great many of them who are looked upon as men of light and leading have been able to find us chapter and verse in the Bible for almost every special aspect of the general doctrine, so much so that the wonder is that so brilliant and obvious a revelation delayed for two and three thousand years to make itself evident, and only did so when the scientific proofs had been painfully accumulated maugre the doughtiest theological opposition. But much of our evolutionary theology is a poor affair, and would hardly be recognized as scientific by the real masters of science. It talks of God as "controlling the process of evolution," as if it were an unruly team of horses and God the coachman on the box. Here it is something truly scientific, but entangled with a good many theological survivals ; but there, and oftener, it is the thin and bloodless ghost of the traditional theology, wearing a few shreds of scientific thought as incongruously and absurdly as the Dahomey chief a silk hat and a paper collar in token of his advance in civilization,—only these and nothing more.

No one has helped us more to a religious interpretation of evolution than John Fiske,—let those who do not love him "Doctor" him,—an interpretation not contaminated with the pseudo-science of the survivalists, and bringing to the philosophy of Spencer a religious temper which has discovered in that philoso-

phy the involution of a more religious meaning than Mr. Spencer himself, has yet found in it or, at least, rendered that meaning in a manner so clear and bright and splendid that of itself the style has gone nigh to persuade us of the validity of the ideas of which it is the streaming garment and the radiant sign.

The closing decades of our century have seen a wonderful softening and adumbration of the traditional theology. English High Churchmen and Scotch Presbyterians are now preaching and teaching heresies whose little fingers are thicker than the thigh of the famous "Essays and Reviews," which appeared almost simultaneously with the "Origin of Species." With our own Presbyterians and Congregationalists it is much the same. The process generally is strangely intermixed of worse and better parts. The most astonishing phenomenon is a certain Christocentric theology, as it is called, which generally takes its departure from the least historical of the Four Gospels, and develops itself freely, with but little reference to criticism, history, or psychology. It fancies that it has a trinitarian philosophy, and assures us that it would have this if there had been no Christian history and no trinitarian theology, which some of us are very much inclined to doubt. But, granted the trinitarian philosophy, how bridge the gulf between it and the historic Jesus, and make Him the second person of the new social trinity? The answers to this question are so different that they mutually destroy each other. The fact is the bridge cannot be sprung. All that verbal ingenuity and gorgeous rhetoric can do to twist the cables has been done; but there is no artifice of theological engineering that is not inadequate and ridiculous when it would effect a passage from any

system of universals to a specialization of Jesus that would either identify him with the Infinite God or so much as bring the two into any kind of absolutely unique relation whatsoever.

I have not half lived out my century, but I must bring it to a close. What shall we say of the general direction of the stream the course of which we have been following? Has it not been ever toward the better things? It is true that it has sometimes turned upon itself, and frequently been clogged and checked by various impediments. But ever has the general direction been toward a vaster universe and a greater God,—a God not sitting on the circle of the earth, but immanent in the material universe, and yet transcendent of its utmost bound; a Man who can afford to be reminded of his long ascent through lower forms of life, who finds in that ascent the token of his royal blood and state; a Jesus as entirely human at the red-ripe of his heart as any man whose feet have trod the blessed acres of the world; an Immortality which would not be abashed if the body of Jesus should now be found, as a Unitarian of the former days hypothesized, in a Judean sepulchre, because it builds its hope upon the aspirations of the intellect and the affections of the heart and the conscience's unrealized ideas; a Freedom of the Will which is less something given outright than the acquisition of incalculable toil.

“We need some charmer,” Plato said; and it was long ago he said it. But our need is still the same. We need some soul sublimely strong and meek, to the music of whose living thought and consecrated will the facts of modern science—facts which include the life and history of man as well as that nature which is underneath his feet—will fit themselves in ordered

courses as to Amphion's lyre the obsequious stones into the walls of Thebes. Who of us in some better hour has not enjoyed a momentary vision of the blessed thing that it would be if such a man should come and gather up into himself all that is best in the converging lines of our philosophy and science, our theology and poetry and art? How would our minds be stirred! How would our hearts be comforted and cheered! How would the mill-round of our daily toil and sorrow brighten to a golden pathway of the sun!

“Far off, too far, the hours that bring
This morrow which we pine to see!
Far off they wait, with folded wing;
Yet holy thoughts are prophecy,
The hopeful eye is victory,
The present soul a world to be.”

THE RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

REV. S. M. CROTHERS

To indulge in prophecy is an amiable weakness into which all of us fall at times. When we find the Present refractory it is a relief to turn to the more ductile material of the Future. Here we may mould everything to the heart's desire.

But it must be confessed that the things foretold seldom happen—at least in the manner in which they are foretold. The unfolding of human history is a succession of surprises, and those events were at the time not the least surprising which in the retrospect seem to have been inevitable. We cannot guess what is to be the epoch-making discovery of the next generation, nor where shall arise the next great religious genius who is to shock and stimulate the world by a new impulse of the spirit. All that we can be sure of is that he who fulfills our expectations and thinks our thoughts after us, will not be a religious genius, but a commonplace and well-meaning person, like the rest of us. Matthew, in narrating the story of Jesus, likes to say that this or that thing was done “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.” But the things which are thus introduced are the least interesting, and moreover they are often the very things of which we have a shrewd suspicion that they never happened. The characteristic events did not take place to fulfill a prediction, they were not foregone conclusions, but came unheralded.

In speaking, therefore, of the religious outlook, I

shall try as far as possible to avoid the fascinating futility of prophecy. In fact, when one looks out he cannot see far, and, strictly speaking, what he sees is not the events future, but the potentialities of the present. He sees present forms and conditions. He can estimate, in some degree, their power and the trend of these forces, and the permanency of these conditions. He is like one who watches an archer bend his bow and who sees the direction in which the arrow flies, but who cannot, for the mist, see whether it actually reaches its aim.

We have heard of the progress of religion during this century. Some forces have been spent, some enthusiasms have died, some doctrines have been discredited and are fast being forgotten. But what is there in the present that still has vigor, that gives promise of a future? In deliberative assemblies after the reports of the work already done, there is the opportunity for the consideration of unfinished business. What is the unfinished business of the religious world, and what force is there to carry it on? It is this unspent energy which now enlists our attention.

When we ask what is the present tendency in the religious world, the answer must be that now, as always, there are many tendencies and people are being moved in different directions. The adherents of the most diverse forms of faith have reason for encouragement as they read the signs of the times. The oracle speaks with more than Delphic ambiguity, leaving us to interpret it according to our personal interests and expectations.

There is a tendency to freedom, and yet the Roman Catholic Church grows apace in America; and one of the most remarkable events of the last few

years has been the rise of the Salvation Army, which is modeled on a military despotism. There has undoubtedly been an increase in rationalism, and yet at the same time multitudes have been attracted to Theosophy and Spiritualism; and in the face of natural science and in direct opposition to its methods, has come the mystical "Christian Science." In England in the last half-century liberalism has gained many victories; and yet in the Church of England it is the high-church party, and not the broad, that is now in the ascendant and that speaks with the most strength and confidence. Many customs which had been cast aside as mediæval rubbish have been restored to places of honor. Biblical criticism has discredited old ideas about inspiration, and yet the churches which cling to these ideas have never been more prosperous. The good Presbyterian will tell you that there were never so many candidates for the ministry ready to subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith. When we ask for some indication of the future, we are told to look at the tens of thousands of young people who are banded together and will enthusiastically give their allegiance to the old faith.

But in this case the appeal to statistics cannot be a final one. The imposing show of numbers, or even the contagion of enthusiasm, indicates only what is at present the popular religion. The serious question is: Is the popular religion true? Does it correspond with our best knowledge of the world, and is it verified by wide and deep experience? There are other causes which may make for temporary success, but these must be eliminated when we face the real question. When we inquire into the outlook for a bridge

which has been long in use, a great many irrelevant arguments may be made in its favor. The bridge was built by a distinguished engineer; it has stood a great many years and has never given way; it is a prominent feature in the landscape, and many excellent people are greatly attached to it; it is necessary that at this point there should be a bridge, and it is the only one that is built there; moreover, there never was a time when it was so much used, and every day it is thronged by passengers, old and young. These persons so implicitly trust it that they greatly resent the impertinence of those who would examine the timbers. Now, it is evident that the opinions of those who refuse to examine, however numerous and estimable these persons may be, can reveal only the state of public opinion. When we want to know the state of the bridge we must go to the experts who have examined it.

The test which must be applied is a simple one. Faith may transcend our verified knowledge, but it must not contradict it. The question is, how does religious dogma agree with the body of ascertained fact? The patient methods of investigation have in our century added vastly to this body of ascertained fact. Theologians had ventured to propound theories about the origin of the world, the beginning of human life, the course of history, the authorship of the Bible and the like. When those doctrines were promulgated there was no way of testing them. They were like the maps of the world before the explorers had actually surveyed the new lands. The map makers filled in the vague outlines of the continents according to their own imagination. When the country that was surmised came to be explored, the authority of

the maps was rudely shaken. So to-day the question is: How do the things which have been believed agree with the things that are certainly known?

In the religious world to-day we may roughly distinguish three characteristic attitudes: that of orthodoxy or traditionalism, that of what is called the "new orthodoxy," and that of a frank liberalism.

And first we have the attitude of an imperturbable orthodoxy. The standpoint of orthodoxy to-day is at first sight confusing. So many admissions have been made, so many facts which seem fatal to the integrity of its scheme have been accepted, that one thinks at first that the scheme itself has been given up, or, at least, greatly modified. For it is evident that the facts discovered have been against it.

But orthodoxy to-day denies that it has any antagonism to secular science—the day for that has past. One is surprised at the readiness to admit facts which once caused grave apprehension. It admits the facts, but it refuses to draw from them the most obvious inferences. It accepts in terms the revolutionary discoveries of the modern world—and then goes on as if nothing had happened. You will find intelligent persons who will listen to the geologist, and the anthropologist, and accept their conclusions about the gradual growth of the world, and the evolution of life. All this they readily receive as science. The vast antiquity of man, and his slow progress upward are to them familiar facts. But the next Sunday they will assent to a system of theology based on the fall of Adam six thousand years ago. The methods of modern historical criticism they approve, but that these methods apply to the history of the Bible they do not

perceive. They are familiar with the studies of the growth of myth and legend; and yet they base their faith on reports of miracles by writers whose names and dates they are unable to verify.

The orthodoxy of the past was severely logical. The orthodoxy of the present is more humane and kindly; but its premises are no longer on speaking terms with its conclusions. The orthodox mind, of the kind I have in view, is like a storehouse full of the materials out of which high explosives are made. There is no immediate danger of explosion, simply because each element is stored by itself in a separate compartment.

What modern orthodoxy lacks, and what it dreads, is the unifying touch. To attempt to correlate the different elements which it already accepts would be to destroy the integrity of the system.

But to say that it lacks intellectual consistency is not to say that it is destined to speedy extinction. It has been wisely remarked that "a clock does not run down the moment the key is lost." Many of the Churches whose theology has been kept unchanged are still very much alive. But it is fair to say that it is not their theology that keeps them alive. The rigid creeds have been retained, but they are no longer the central things in the affections of the people. The real interests are social, ethical, philanthropic. These subjects are alive, while theology is thought of as something remote. The inherited doctrines are still accepted, but they have ceased to be interesting. There are still those who discuss the abstruse questions, but no longer as those who fight for their homes, and in the presence of those they love. The battle has drifted away to the dim regions at the confines of

human thought. It is like King Arthur's "last weird battle in the West."

"Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea."

And like that battle, the issues are confused :

"And friend and foe were shadows in the mist."

The second characteristic attitude in our time is that of what is called "Liberal Orthodoxy." Under this term is included the progressive movement in all our older Churches, which seeks greater breadth and freedom without any break with the old institutions. In its spirit it is thoroughly modern; it receives its inspiration from present discoveries, it frankly declares the need of reconstruction of doctrine. This new orthodoxy is in many respects more radical than the heresy of a generation ago. It is not content to go along as if nothing had happened. Something has happened; new influences are at work, and new ideals are followed. The new orthodoxy, with a magnanimity rare in theological discussion, acknowledges freely its indebtedness to the heretics of the past. It is ready to cast aside those doctrines which offend the moral sense. The substance of Channing's "Moral Argument against Calvinism" is repeated in many a nominally orthodox pulpit. Christianity is treated as a life and not as a dogma; the Bible is accepted as religious literature, and not as a collection of infallible proof texts; the horrors of eternal punishment have ceased to be preached, and love takes the place of fear as a motive power.

So rapid and so beneficent has been this change that criticism seems as ungracious as it would be to point out defects in one of those days in Spring when Nature is awaking to glad new life. In many ways the new orthodoxy is a larger, more humane and efficient movement than that which manifested itself in the "Liberal Christianity" of Universalism and Unitarianism. The coming up of a part of the main army is more inspiring than the advance of skirmishers. The liberalism within the orthodox fold has the advantage of not wasting itself or fretting its spirit in controversy. The controversialist is apt to be partial, and there comes a narrowness of sympathy from the necessity he is under of holding his position against great odds. Then, too, the new orthodoxy has the advantage of the wider view and the clearer thought which has come as a part of the common thought of the time. It is just such an opportunity as Channing longed for—the opportunity to develop religious thought naturally and peacefully, without the distraction which comes to those who try to build up a new sect.

As a *movement* the liberal orthodoxy must command our warmest sympathy. It is a noble movement in the right direction. The modern Unitarian has no quarrel with it, but gains from it much inspiration. As a phase of thought in what is confessedly a transition period it is full of promise.

What is the outlook for liberal orthodoxy?

I can best express my own thought of it by saying that its tendency is admirable, but its present position is untenable. It is strongest when on the march, but it makes a mistake when it stops to build fortifications. I do not say that it must follow in the

path of Unitarianism ; but I do not believe that it can remain permanently in the camps which Unitarianism has been compelled to evacuate.

This is what the present position of liberal orthodoxy amounts to. We hear much of Christo-centric theology, as if it were a new thing ; it is a phase of thought which is obviously transitional, and yet the attempt is made to treat it as if it were a finality. Having given up the claims of Church authority, of Biblical infallibility, and the argument from miracles, the last stand for supernaturalism is made around the person of Christ. Everywhere else the methods of orderly evolution are accepted, but Jesus is held to be unique and unapproachable—at once the example of perfect humanity and an exception to all the laws governing the development of humanity. I said Jesus, but it is not the Jesus of the earlier story, but the Christ of the Fourth Gospel, the Eternal Word, the light that lighteth every man, that was become the centre of thought and worship. Without faith in Him, we are told the world is a hopeless riddle, and God must be forever unrevealed.

It must be remembered that early Unitarianism tried to be Christo-centric also. Its great effort was to show that, while rejecting the metaphysical subtleties of the Trinitarian formula, it could still exalt Christ to a mysterious eminence above humanity. It was a Unitarian who wrote

“ In the Cross of Christ I glory,
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time ;
 All the light of sacred story
 Gathers round its head sublime.”

And how sturdily the defenders of this faith resisted the efforts of those who hinted that humanity might

have sacred stories unconnected with historic Christianity, and that *all* the light did not centre in any one person, however holy, nor in any single event, however sublime.

The Christo-centric position has been given up by Unitarians, not from choice, but from necessity. So stupendous a claim made for an individual needs a great mass of historic evidence to support it ; and this evidence is not to be obtained. The critical study of the origin of Christianity has steadily weakened the theory of supernaturalism. On the other hand, the candid investigation of other great religion has made the student familiar with the claims they make to supernatural origin.

Liberal orthodoxy must face the same difficulties that Unitarianism has already met. It must come to see that there is a difference between the acceptance of Jesus as an example of the highest humanity ; and the assertion that he was a being higher than humanity.

If the belief of liberal orthodoxy in the supernatural character of Christ could be fixed within the limits of its present definition, we might be more confident in regard to its future. But it defies definition ; it is as vague as it is beautiful, and its outlines fade away as we look. What is meant by Christ and the incarnation? What is meant by the Trinity? Already Christ has become the ideal of spiritual manhood ; the incarnation of the divine power is seen in every pure and holy soul ; man's nature, we are told, is a trinity, as well as God's. Dogmas are thus spiritualized till they become the medium for universal ideas. But when this has been accomplished, the dogma has become a symbol, whose use is to suggest

rather than to define. Already, many who assert most earnestly the necessity of faith in Christ, explain that there is an "essential Christ" which the devout heathen and the pure-minded sceptic may live by. This is a large, generous faith; but the belief in the "essential Christ" must carry with it the inference that the historical Christ is not essential. A symbol may be helpful, but it is not necessary; and there is always the possibility that other symbols may be equally helpful to other minds. The value of any symbol is relative to the mind that uses it, and not to the truth which it illustrates. There are evidences that the Christo-centric theology is rapidly expanding into a "faith that finds centre everywhere, nor cares to fix itself to form." The idea of the Christ escapes its traditional theological limitations and becomes "a fluent image of the unstable best; still changing in the very hands that wrought."

This brings us to the standpoint of a frank religious liberalism which no longer thinks it necessary to make any compromise with the standards of orthodoxy. It is the standpoint of an increasing number of people who have individually emancipated themselves from tradition, and who yet feel the power and reality of religion. It is the point toward which the Unitarian body has from the beginning been tending.

The growth of our country has been most signally manifested by the fact that prosperous States have been established in the region which the map-makers of a former generation designated as "the great American desert." The growth of religion is manifested by the fact that possibilities of pure and happy living, of generous endeavor and of reverent worship have been found in what the older teachers

looked upon as the dreary desert of free thought. The religious life is actually being lived under intellectual conditions, conditions which our fathers declared to be fatal to all religion. This is the significant fact that greets us.

During the past century the death rate among the infallibilities has been abnormally high. Many a rude shock and many a fatal chill has come to the pretensions of infallible Churches and to infallible books. Many of the most venerable props to religion have been taken away—yet religion has not fallen. It is noticeable that those who are freest in their thought and least dogmatic in their temper are the ones who are least apprehensive of the future of religion. This courageous faith comes from their conviction of its perfect naturalness.

The identification of religion with one specific form which was supposed to have had a miraculous origin, always brings with it a doubt as to its contrivance. What suddenly and unexpectedly began, may just as suddenly and unexpectedly come to an end. Faith created by a miracle may sometime be destroyed by a counter-miracle, or when the memory of the first miracle grows dim, it may perish unless miraculously reinforced. One perceives this underlying doubt in the fear which heretics and sceptics have inspired. The timid believers think it possible that these may utterly destroy the faith they hold so dear. Those who identify religion with some one dogmatic system must always fear the restless, questioning intellect, for a new discovery may destroy the very foundation on which the ancient dogmas rested.

The liberal thinker, on the other hand, does not look back to any one period in historic time when

religion was introduced. He believes that it has grown as naturally and as inevitably as have laws or arts or civilization. Like everything else, it is imperfect, but its growth is governed by unerring law. It has its ideals by which it may be judged. It has assumed many forms in the past and must assume many more in the future. Its history is coeval with that of the race. Just what its future may be we may not be able to foretell, but that it has a future, of that we have no doubt.

Just one thing of practical importance I wish to say in regard to the outlook for the liberal form of religion. It has been often said that while it may appeal to the few it must always be feeble in its influence over masses of men. I do not see that this is a necessary conclusion. We are apt to admire the elaborate ecclesiastical organization of a church like that of Rome, and to speak as if it were the indication of resistless power. But this is to make the mistake of imagining that a machine is efficient in proportion to its weight or its complexity. The purpose of a machine is not to create power, but to utilize it; and, other things being equal, the simpler it is the better. The more direct the application of power the greater the triumph of inventive skill. At present the great effort is to do away with the loss which comes through friction in clumsy machinery.

And is it not the same with religious machinery? Let us see the problem as it is. Here on the one side is the work to be done: A world to be subdued; social institutions to be reformed; lives to be purified; minds to be enlarged; consciences to be aroused; hearts to be lifted to true worship. And where is the power to be found to do this work? We believe that

it is not to be brought from afar. God has stored the power where it is needed. All we have to do is to apply it. Not only does man need religion, but he has within him the germs of the religion which he needs. It is our highest skill to transform the potential moral and spiritual energy into actual power. How clumsy, as yet, is all our ecclesiastical machinery ; what waste in friction ! Is a work of social righteousness to be done ? That is efficient organization which enlists all the honesty and right feeling of the community in the work. That is the best machinery which most perfectly utilizes all the power. And the spiritual ends of the Church must be reached with a similar directness. When the invitation is given, "let us pray," how partial and how feeble is the response. Only those who think alike, those who are agreed in theory or in taste, feel that they can pray together. But can we not imagine a Church so large and strong and simple, that its invitation might meet with a response as wide as the wants of men ? Here, indeed, might all men bury their wounded hearts, here give voice to all their aspirations.

In the building of such a Church we have a humble, yet a necessary past. The intellectual struggle of the nineteenth century has prepared the place for it. The new century must carry the work on to nobler issues than we have yet conceived.

PRIESTLEY, THE PHILOSOPHER

DR. JAMES W. HOLLAND

With no disposition to lessen the praise due him for his devotion to the cause of theological and political freedom, it may be said that by the world at large Priestley is chiefly remembered as a man of science, the chemist who discovered the most abundant and most potent element in the world—oxygen. Certainly on no occasion intended to do honor to his memory should the votaries of science be without a representative to declare that his name is one they may not willingly let die. My part is not to tell you what Priestley the saint was, for that is recorded in imperishable marble on your walls, or what Priestley the patriot did for the race, for that is the function of a historian, but to briefly tell why chemists and physiologists hold Priestley, the philosopher, in such high esteem.

Viewing his scientific labors, we rank first in importance his contributions to our knowledge of the atmosphere. A few months ago Lord Rayleigh startled the scientific world by his discovery of a new constituent of the atmosphere, which, because of its inertness, he named Argon, *i. e.*, without energy. For more than a hundred years no important addition had been made to our knowledge of the air, hence honors were showered upon him in recognition of the brilliancy and importance of his research. While Rayleigh's results have been as yet more interesting than practical, no one can doubt the ultimate value of any addition to our information concerning the air we breathe. To

express the supreme act of man's creation, it is related that "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

Though its significance in the life of man must have been appreciated early, the real nature of the breath of life remained for ages unknown. Jove himself was in Greek mythology the emblem of the all-sustaining air. Through the stages of birth, growth and decay philosophical systems had their day; arts, religions, literatures, empires, civilizations ran their courses and gave place to something new, but for more than a thousand years the accepted opinion upon the constitution of matter was unchanged from that of Aristotle. Air was considered one of four elements with earth, fire and water; from varying mixtures of these all things were supposed to be composed.

The complexity of the air was not demonstrated until the time of Priestley. For several centuries different gases had been experimented upon and compared with the atmospheric air, with the result of suggesting the doctrine that these gases were but vitiated conditions of that atmosphere. The air was still considered an undecomposable substance, varying in its condition as it received emanations from factories, from animals and from the soil.

In the middle of the last century, Boyle made a great sensation with his observations on *the fixed air*, a gas now called carbon dioxide, and a few years later Cavendish drew attention to *inflammable air*, now called hydrogen. Attracted to this field of research, Dr. Priestley turned upon it the search-light of his genius. Wholly untrained in the processes of chemical experiment, but with a natural aptitude for delicate manipulation, he handled his rude apparatus of bottles

and washtubs with great deftness, directing his inquiry by a quick and keen imagination, and reaching his conclusions with that rare logical ability which in political discussions had won surrender from Blackstone himself. He made the highly important discovery that the atmosphere was not a single, homogeneous body, but a mixture of several different substances, members of a large family of similar bodies. In the course of his experiments he devised a new method for manipulating gases, so simple, yet efficient, that it is still used by chemists under the name of the pneumatic trough. Using water and washtubs originally, he introduced mercury and the laboratory trough for the handling of gases soluble in water.

Including his crowning discovery of oxygen, or as he called it, *dephlogisticated air*, he discovered and described for the first time nine gases—a larger number than all preceding investigators put together could claim. He separated and studied the properties of nitrous and nitric oxides, of sulphur dioxide, silicon tetra-fluoride, hydrochloric acid, ammonia, methane, carbon monoxide. He made known many of the properties of nitrogen, and materially added to our knowledge of the properties of hydrogen.

He is credited with having been the first to draw attention to the acid compound formed by the electric discharge through enclosed air. With this method Cavendish discovered nitric acid, and two years ago Rayleigh employed it in his study of argon.

We have an amiable habit of attaching to a new idea the name of its originator, as the *Galvanic* current, the *Bell* telephone, the *Roentgen* ray. If Priestley had been thus recognized, every soda water fountain would be a monument to his memory, for it

was he who invented the process for saturating our national summer beverage with the gas that gives agreeability to carbonated water.

The true nature of *fire* had been a problem to vex the souls of philosophers ever since the age that imagined the fable of Prometheus. Various speculations had been broached concerning it. Priestley attacked the question in his own way, and his experimental solution of it created the science of modern chemistry. His was a real Promethean gift to his race. In this investigation upon combustion, he met again his new atmospheric gas we call oxygen, taking part in every common fire and necessary to it. Turning to the phenomena of *life*, he found that in a confined portion of air a living man soon deprived it of its oxygen and at the same time of its life-sustaining quality. If cut off from a circulation of fresh air, animals soon died of suffocation. When nearly suffocated, if they were given a supply of oxygen, they would revive at once. This gas was the emblem of the spirit, the breath of life which enabled man to become a living soul. Priestley was now confronted by the question: If, then, all animals constantly consume it, how is the air replenished with this necessary element? Enormous though the reservoir be, in a few years it must be exhausted unless some equally constant process of restoration is carried out by nature. To him was revealed this agency also. When he put a small plant and a mouse together in a tight glass vessel, the life of the mouse was preserved. The plant in the sunlight restored to the air that which the animal removed, and took from the air the deadly gas of the animal breath. Modern science has confirmed and elaborated this discovery. As Priestley was the first who summoned into

the presence of the mind the ruling power of the air, so was he the first to catch a glimpse of that wonderful circle of life by which the animal is nourished at the expense of the plant returning to the soil for the support of the plant that which it had lost and in which circle, while the animal takes out of the air its vital element, the plant regenerates that element in the simple act of living and growing. Every tyro in science knows now this reciprocal action of plant and animal; knows also that animal physiology is largely a study of oxidation processes in the body. The new chemistry and the new physiology note other chemical reactions of great importance, but the capital place held by oxygen in dead and living nature remains undisputed.

In his chemical philosophy Priestley held to the opinions of Stahl known as the "phlogistic" theory, namely, that burning and breathing bodies gave up a principle called phlogiston. For lack of early mathematical and scientific training rather than from natural mental limitations, he failed to estimate properly the prime importance of quantitative relations and it was reserved to Lavoisier to use the determinations made with the balance upon Priestley's own experiments to overthrow the phlogistic theory and prepare a way for Dalton's atomic theory which has superseded it. It was in this connection that Cuvier called Priestley "the father of modern chemistry who would never acknowledge his daughter."

His devotion to the phlogistic theory in no way discredits his intellectual powers. "There are ideas," says Liebig, "so great and vast that, even when entirely perforated, as it were, in all directions, they leave enough of matter to occupy the powers of

thought of mankind for a century. Such a vast idea was that of phlogiston. The question as to its material existence was void of all significance so long as the idea was fruitful in the classification of known facts and prepared the way for new generalizations."

Among these ideas we may place the view advanced by Dalton, that the universe is made of atoms that are indestructible and whose own endowments are competent to produce all action, change and life. Modern chemistry is a development of this helpful theory.

But the greatest minds have been and continue to be ever more dissatisfied with it as a system of philosophy. Like the theory of phlogiston, which it supplanted, it has been overtaxed.

The philosophers of our period find the same difficulty that Priestley had in accepting the view that matter is impenetrable.

To the deeper thought of the philosopher the indivisible material particle and the all-pervading ether are only highly useful and convenient figments. Before this transcendent enigma of the ultimate constitution of matter we are as helpless as were the ancients, nor does it seem likely that the methods of natural science will avail to pluck out the heart of the mystery. Says a profound scientist of our time, "We shall never know any better than we now do the spectre that haunts the world of matter." Much odium fell to the lot of Priestley because in his speculations he was a professed materialist. The late Prof. Huxley has pointed out evidence that Priestley "saw dimly the seed of destruction which such materialism carries within its own bosom." He admitted "that our knowledge of matter is a knowledge of its prop-

erties ; and that of its substance—if it have a substance—we know nothing.” And this led to the further admission that “ so far as we can know, there may be no difference between the substance of matter and the substance of spirit.”

This is virtually an acknowledgment that matter and substance are possibly only illusive terms, and if this be called materialism it is certainly not of that school which holds matter to be the origin and principle of all existing things. Men of science often find their occupation so absorbing that they become too busy to consider the great problems of religion or to reap the happiness that comes of cultivating the life of the spirit. It was not so with Priestley, who was an ardent theologian and a devout Christian.

He found in his travels that the leading thinkers of Paris were all unbelievers in Christianity, and he records his reason for it that “they did not know anything about Christianity.” His idea of it was not like the body of dogmas and practices which characterized the orthodox Churches of the last century. Priestley thought for himself in religion, believed in immortality as a reward for right living, and was very sure of God. All the great questions that science cannot answer were solved for him in his acceptance of the Christian doctrine of God, the loving Father who gives eternal life to His faithful children.

In setting up this bust, his latest memorial, it is pleasant to recall the fact that among the earliest to recognize the merits of Priestley was our own Franklin, then residing in London. Franklin encouraged him to write the history of electricity and furnished him with important data for it.

He was prompted to enter upon the field of original research in electricity, and on the strength of his brilliant results he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society, and afterwards Doctor of Laws of Edinburgh. During his lifetime he received from many foreign academies the honor of membership. After a hundred years the city that had cast him out, Birmingham, erected a monument to him, and a marble statue of him was set up by Oxford University—at one time his relentless foe.

To the ideas for which this Church stands he gave most of his thought, and in their behalf suffered much persecution.

It is most fit that here should be placed the portrait bust of the Patriot, Saint and Philosopher, who made the greatest of all chemical discoveries.

A CENTURY'S PROGRESS IN SCIENCE*

JOHN FISKE, LITT. D., LL.D.

In the course of the year 1774, Dr. Priestley found that by heating red precipitate, or what we now call red oxide of mercury, a gas was obtained, which he called "dephlogisticated air," or, in other words, air deprived of phlogiston, and therefore incombustible. This incombustible air was *oxygen*, and such was man's first introduction to the mighty element that makes one-fifth of the atmosphere in volume, and eight-ninths of the ocean by weight, besides forming one-half of the earth's solid crust, and supporting all fire and all life. I know of nothing which can reveal to us with such startling vividness the extent of the gulf which the human mind has traversed within little more than a hundred years. It is scarcely possible to put ourselves back into the frame of mind in which oxygen was unknown, and no man could tell what takes place when a log of wood is burned on the hearth. The language employed by Dr. Priestley carries us back to the time when chemistry was beginning to emerge from alchemy. It was Newton's contemporary, Stahl, who invented the doctrine of phlogiston in order to account for combustion. Stahl supposed that all combustible substances contain a common element, or fire-principle, which he called phlogiston, and which escapes in the process of combustion. Indeed, the act of combustion was supposed to consist in the escape of phlogiston. Whither this mys-

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terious fire-principle betook itself, after severing its connection with visible matter, was not too clearly indicated, but of course it was to that limbo far larger than purgatory, the oubliette wherein have perished men's unsuccessful guesses at truth. Stahl's theory, however, marked a great advance upon what had gone before, inasmuch as it stated the case in such a way as to admit of direct refutation. Little use was made of the balance in those days, but when it was observed that zinc and lead and sundry other substances grow heavier in burning, it seemed hardly correct to suppose that anything had escaped from these substances. To this objection the friends of the fire-principle replied that phlogiston might weigh less than nothing, or, in other words, might be endowed with a positive attribute of levity, so that to subtract it from a body would increase the weight of the body. This was a truly shifty method of reasoning in which your phlogiston, with its plus sign to-day and its minus sign to-morrow, exhibited a skill in facing both ways like that of an American candidate for public office.

Into the structure of false science that had been reared upon these misconceptions, Dr. Priestley's discovery of oxygen came like a bombshell. As in so many other like cases, the discovery was destined to come at about that time; it was made again three years afterward by the Swedish chemist Scheele, without knowing what Priestley had done. The study of oxygen soon pointed to the conclusion that, whatever may escape during combustion, oxygen is always united with the burning substance. Then came Lavoisier, with his balance, and proved that whenever a thing burns it combines with Priestley's oxygen, and the weight of the resulting product is equal to the

weight of the substance burned plus the weight of oxygen abstracted from the air. Thus, combustion is simply union with oxygen, and nothing escapes. No room was left for phlogiston. Men's thoughts were dephlogisticated from that time forth. The balance became the ruling instrument of chemistry. One further step led to the generalization that in all chemical changes there is no such thing as increase or diminution, but only substitution, and upon this fundamental truth of the indestructibility of matter all modern chemistry rests.

When we look at the stupendous edifice of science that has been reared upon this basis; when we consider the almost limitless sweep of inorganic and organic chemistry; the myriad applications to the arts; the depth to which we have been enabled to penetrate into the innermost proclivities of matter, it seems almost incredible that a single century can have witnessed so much achievement. We must admit the fact, but our minds cannot take it in; we are staggered by it. One thing stands out prominently, as we contrast this rapid and coherent progress with the barrenness of ancient alchemy and the chaotic fumbling of the Stahl period; we see the importance of untrammelled inquiry and of sound methods of investigation which admit of verification at every step. That humble instrument the balance, working in the service of sovereign law, has been a beneficent Jinni, unlocking the portals of many a chamber wherein may be heard the secret harmonies of the world.

It is not only in chemistry, however, that the marvelous advance of science has been exhibited. In all directions the quantity of achievement has been so marked that it is worth our while to take a brief

general survey of the whole, to see if haply we may seize upon the fundamental characteristics of this great progress. In the first place, a glance at astronomy will show us how much our knowledge of the world has enlarged in space since the day when Priestley set free his dephlogisticated air.

The known solar system then consisted of sun, moon, earth, and the five planets visible to the naked eye. Since the days of the Chaldæan shepherds there had been no additions, except the moons of Jupiter and Saturn. Herschel's telescope was to win its first triumph in the detection of Uranus in 1781. The Newtonian theory, promulgated in 1687, had come to be generally accepted, but there were difficulties remaining, connected with the planetary perturbations and the inequalities in the moon's motion, which the glorious labors of Lagrange and Laplace were presently to explain and remove—labors which bore their full fruition two generations later, in 1845, when the discovery of the planet Neptune, by purely mathematical reasoning from the observed effects of its gravitation, furnished for the Newtonian theory the grandest confirmation known in the whole history of science. In Priestley's time sidereal astronomy was little more than the cataloguing of such stars and nebulae as could be seen with the telescopes then at command. Sixty years after the discovery of oxygen the distance of no star had been measured. In 1836, Auguste Comte assured his readers that such a feat was impossible, that the Newtonian theory could never be proved to extend through the interstellar spaces, and that the matter of which stars are composed may be entirely different in its properties from the matter with which we are familiar. Within three years the first part of

this prophecy was disproved when Bessel measured the distance of the star 61 Cygni ; since then the study of the movements of double and multiple stars shows them conforming to Newton's law ; and as for the matter of which they are composed, we are introduced to a chapter in science which even the boldest speculator of half a century ago would have derided as a baseless dream. The discovery of spectrum analysis and the invention of the spectroscope, completed in 1861 by Kirchhoff and Bunsen, have supplied data for the creation of a stellar chemistry, showing us, for example, hydrogen in Sirius and the nebula of Orion, sodium and potassium, calcium and iron, in the sun, demonstrating the gaseous character of nebulæ, and revealing chemical elements hitherto unknown, such as helium, a mineral first detected in the sun's atmosphere, and afterward found in Norway. A still more wonderful result of spectrum analysis is our ability to measure the motion of a star through a slight shifting in the wave-lengths of the light which it emits. In this way we can measure, in the absence of all parallax, the direct approach or recession of a star ; and in somewhat similar wise has been discovered the cause of the long-observed variations of brilliancy in Algol. That star, which is about the size of our sun, has a dark companion not much smaller, and the twain are moving around a third body, also dark ; the result is an irregular series of eclipses of Algol, and the gravitative forces exerted by the two invisible stars are measured through their effects upon the spectrum of the bright one. In no department of science has a region of inference been reached more remote than this. From such a flight one may come back gently to more familiar regions

while remarking upon the manifold results that have begun to be attained from the application of a sensitive photograph plate to the telescope in place of the human eye. It may suffice to observe that we thus catch the fleeting aspects of sun spots and preserve them for study; we detect the feeble self-luminosity still left in such a slowly cooling planet as Jupiter; and since the metallic plate does not quickly weary, like the human retina, the cumulative effects of its long exposure reveal the existence of countless stars and nebulae too remote to be otherwise reached by any visual process. By such photographic methods George Darwin has caught an equatorial ring in the act of detachment from its parent nebula, and the successive phases of the slow process may be watched and recorded by generations of mortals yet to come.

To appreciate the philosophic bearings of this vast enlargement of the mental horizon, let us recall just what happened when Newton first took the leap from earth into the celestial spaces by establishing a law of physics to which moon and apple alike conform. It was the first step, and a very long one, toward proving that the terrestrial and celestial worlds are dynamically akin, that the same kind of order prevails through both alike, that both are parts of one cosmic whole. So late as Kepler's time, it was possible to argue that the planets are propelled in their elliptic orbits by forces quite unlike any that are disclosed by purely terrestrial experience, and therefore perhaps inaccessible to any rational interpretation. Such imaginary lines of demarcation between earth and heavens were forever swept away by Newton, and the recent work of spectrum analysis simply completes

the demonstration that the remotest bodies which the photographic telescope can disclose are truly part and parcel of the dynamic world in which we live.

All this enlargement of the mental horizon, from Newton to Kirchhoff, had reference to space. The nineteenth century has witnessed an equally notable enlargement with reference to time. The beginnings of scientific geology were much later than those of astronomy. The phenomena were less striking and far more complicated; it took longer, therefore, to bring men's minds to bear upon them. Antagonism on the part of theologians was also slower in dying out. The complaint against Newton, that he substituted Blind Gravitation for an Intelligent Deity, was nothing compared to the abuse that was afterwards lavished upon geologists for disturbing the accepted Biblical chronology. At the time when Priestley discovered oxygen, educated men were still to be found who could maintain with a sober face that fossils had been created already dead and petrified, just for the fun of the thing. The writings of Buffon were preparing men's minds for the belief that the earth's crust has witnessed many and important changes, but there could be no scientific geology until further progress was made in physics and chemistry. It was only in 1763 that Joseph Black discovered latent heat, and thus gave us a clue to what happens when water freezes and melts, or when it is turned into steam. It was in 1786 that the publication of James Hutton's "Theory of the Earth" ushered in the great battle between Neptunians and Plutonists which prepared the way for scientific geology. When the new science won its first great triumph with Lyell in 1830, the philosophic purport of the event was the same

that was being proclaimed by the progress of astronomy. Newton proved that the forces which keep the planets in their orbits are not strange or supernatural forces, but just such forces as we are familiar with on this earth every moment of our lives. Geologists before Lyell had been led to the conclusion that the general aspect of the earth's surface with which we are familiar is by no means its primitive or its permanent aspect, but that there has been a succession of ages, in which the relations of land and water, of mountain and plain, have varied to a very considerable extent; in which soils and climates have undergone most complicated vicissitudes; and in which the earth's vegetable products and its animal populations have again and again assumed new forms, while the old forms have passed away. In order to account for such wholesale changes, geologists were at first disposed to imagine violent catastrophes brought about by strange agencies—agencies which were, perhaps, not exactly supernatural, but in some vague, unspecified way different from the agencies that are now at work in the visible and familiar order of nature. But Lyell proved that the very same kind of physical processes which are now going on about us would suffice, during a long period of time, to produce the changes in the inorganic world which distinguish one geological period from another. Here, in Lyell's geological investigations, there was for the first time due attention paid to the immense importance of the prolonged and cumulative action of slight and unobtrusive causes. The continual dropping that wears away stones might have served as a text for the whole series of beautiful researches of which he first summed up the results in 1830. As astronomy was steadily advancing toward

the proof that in the abysses of space the physical forces at work are the same as our terrestrial forces, so now geology, in carrying us back to enormously remote periods of time, began to teach that the forces at work have all along been the same forces that are at work now. Of course, in that early stage when the earth's crust was in process of formation, when the temperature was excessively high, there were phenomena here such as can no longer be witnessed, but for which we must look to big planets like Jupiter; in that intensely hot atmosphere, violent disturbances occur, and chemical elements are dissociated which we are here accustomed to find in close combination. But ever since our earth cooled to a point at which its solid crust acquired stability, since the earliest mollusks and vertebrates began to swim in the seas and worms to crawl in the damp ground, if you could at almost any time have come here on a visit, you would doubtless have found things going on at measured pace very much as at present,—here and there earthquake and avalanche, fire and flood, but generally rain falling, sunshine quickening, herbage sprouting, creatures of some sort browsing, all as quiet and peaceful as a daisied field in June, without the slightest visible presage of the continuous series of minute secular changes that were gradually to transform a Carboniferous world into what was by and by to be a Jurassic world, and that again into what was after a while to be an Eocene world, and so on until the aspect of the world that we know to-day should noiselessly steal upon us.

When once the truth of Lyell's conclusions began to be distinctly realized, their influence upon men's habits of thought and upon the drift of philosophic speculation was profound. The conception of Evolu-

tion was irresistibly forced upon men's attention. It was proved beyond question that the world was not created in the form in which we find it to-day, but has gone through many phases, of which the latter are very different from the earlier ; and it was shown that, so far as the inorganic world is concerned, the changes can be much more satisfactorily explained by a reference to the ceaseless all-pervading activity of gentle unobtrusive causes such as we know, rather than by an appeal to imaginary catastrophes such as we have no means of verifying. It began to appear, also, that the facts which form the subject-matter of different departments of science are not detached and independent groups of facts, but that all are intimately related one with another, and that all may be brought under contribution in illustrating the history of cosmic events. It was a sense of this interdependence of different departments that led Auguste Comte to write his " Philosophie Positive," the first volume of which appeared in 1830, in which he sought to point out the methods which each science has at command for discovering truth, and the manner in which each might be made to contribute toward a sound body of philosophic doctrine. The attempt had a charm and a stimulus for many minds, but failed by being enlisted in the service of sundry sociological vagaries upon which the author's mind was completely wrecked. Positivism, from being the name of a potent scientific method, became the name of one more among the myriad ways of having a church and regulating the details of life.

While the ponderous mechanical intellect of Comte was striving to elicit the truth from themes beyond its grasp, one of the world's supreme poets had already discerned some of the deeper aspects of

science presently to be set forth. By temperament and by training Goethe was one of the first among evolutionists. The belief in an evolution of higher from lower organisms could not fail to be strongly suggested to a mind like his as soon as the classification of plants and animals had begun to be conducted upon scientific principles. It is not for nothing that a table of classes, orders, families, genera and species, when graphically laid out, resembles a family tree. It was not long after Linnæus that believers in some sort of a development theory, often fantastic enough, began to be met with. The facts of morphology gave further suggestions in the same direction. Such facts were first generalized on a grand scale by Goethe in his beautiful little essay on "The Metamorphoses of Plants," written in 1790, and his "Introduction to Morphology," written in 1795, but not published until 1807. In these profound treatises, which were too far in advance of their age to exert much influence at first, Goethe laid the philosophic foundations of comparative anatomy in both vegetable and animal worlds. The conceptions of metamorphosis and of homology, which were thus brought forward, tended powerfully toward a recognition of the process of evolution. It was shown that what under some circumstances grows into a stem with a whorl of leaves under other circumstances grows into a flower; it was shown that in the general scheme of the vertebrate skeleton a pectoral fin, a fore leg, and a wing occupy the same positions; thus was strongly suggested the idea that what under some circumstances developed into a fin might under other circumstances develop into a leg or a wing. The revelations of palæontology, showing various extinct adult forms, with corresponding organs in

various degrees of development, went far to strengthen this suggestion, until an unanswerable argument was reached with the study of rudimentary organs, which have no meaning except as remnants of a vanished past during which the organism has been changing. The study of comparative embryology pointed in the same direction, for it was soon observed that the embryos and larvæ of the higher forms of each group of animals pass, "in the course of their development, through a series of stages in which they more or less completely resemble the lower forms of the group." (Balfour, "Embryology," i. 2.)

Before the full significance of such facts of embryology and morphology could be felt, it was necessary that the work of classification should be carried far beyond the point at which it had been left by Linnæus. In mapping out the relationships in the animal kingdom, the great Swedish naturalist had relied less than his predecessors upon external or superficial characteristics; the time was arriving when classification should be based upon a thorough study of internal structure, and this was done by a noble company of French anatomists, among whom Cuvier was chief. It was about 1817 that Cuvier's gigantic work reached its climax in bringing palæontology into alliance with systematic zoology, and effecting that grand classification of animals in space and time which at once cast into the shade all that had gone before it. During the past fifty years there have been great changes made in the Cuvierian classification, especially with the lower forms of animal life. His class of *Radiata* has been broken up, other divisions in his invertebrate world have been modified beyond recognition, his vertebrate scheme has been overhauled in many quarters, his

attempt to erect a distinct order for Man has been overthrown. Among the great anatomists concerned in this work the greatest name is that of Huxley. The classification most generally adopted to-day is Huxley's, but it is rather a modification of Cuvier's than a new development. So enduring has been the work of the great Frenchman.

With Cuvier the analysis of the animal organism made some progress in such wise that anatomists began to concentrate their attention upon the study of the development and characteristic functions of organs. Philosophically, this was a long step in advance, but a still longer one was taken at about the same time by that astonishing youth whose career has no parallel in the history of science. When Xavier Bichat died in 1802, in his thirty-first year, he left behind him a treatise on comparative anatomy in which the subject was worked up from the study of the tissues and their properties. The path thus broken by Bichat led to the cell doctrine of Schleiden and Schwann, matured about 1840, which remains, with some modifications, the basis of modern biology. The advance along these lines contributed signally to the advancement of embryology, which reached a startling height in 1829 with the publication of Baer's memorable treatise, in which the development of an ovum is shown to consist in a change from homogeneity to heterogeneity through successive differentiations. But while Baer thus arrived at the very threshold of the law of evolution, he was not in the true sense an evolutionist; he had nothing to say to phylogenetic evolution, or the derivation of the higher forms of life from lower forms through physical descent with modifications. Just so with Cuvier. When he affected his

grand classification, he prepared the way most thoroughly for a general theory of evolution, but he always resisted any such inference from his work. He was building better than he knew.

The hesitancy of such men as Cuvier and Baer was no doubt due partly to the apparent absence of any true cause for physical modifications in species, partly to the completeness with which their own great work absorbed their minds. Often in the history of science we witness the spectacle of a brilliant discoverer traveling in triumph along some new path, but stopping just short of the goal which subsequent exploration has revealed. There it stands looming up before his face, but he is blind to its presence through the excess of light which he has already taken in. The intellectual effort already put forth has left no surplus for any further sweep of comprehension, so that further advance requires a fresher mind and a new start with faculties unjaded and unwarped. To discover a great truth usually requires a succession of thinkers. Among the eminent anatomists who, in the earlier part of our century, were occupied with the classification of animals, there were some who found themselves compelled to believe in phylogenetic evolution, although they could frame no satisfactory theory to account for it. The weight of evidence was already in favor of such evolution, and these men could not fail to see it. Foremost among them was Jean Baptiste Lamarck, whose work was of supreme importance. His views were stated in 1809, in his "Philosophie Zoloogique," and further illustrated in 1815, in his voluminous treatise on invertebrate animals. Lamarck entirely rejected the notion of special creations, and he pointed out some of the important factors in evo-

lution, especially the law that organs and faculties tend to increase with exercise and to diminish with disuse. His weakest point was the disposition to imagine some inherent and ubiquitous tendency toward evolution, whereas a closer study of nature has taught us that evolution occurs only where there is a concurrence of favorable conditions. Among others who maintained some theory of evolution were the two Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, father and son, and the two great botanists, Naudin in France and Hooker in England. In 1852 the case of evolution as against special creations was argued by Herbert Spencer, with convincing force, and in 1855 appeared "The Principles of Psychology," by the same author, a book which is from beginning to end an elaborate illustration of the process of evolution, and is divided from everything that came before it by a gulf as wide as that which divides the Copernican astronomy from the Ptolemaic.

The followers of Cuvier regarded the methods and results of these evolutionists with strong disapproval. In the excess of such a feeling they even went so far as to condemn all philosophic thinking on subjects within the scope of natural history as visionary and unscientific. Why seek for any especial significance in the fact that every spider and every lobster is made up of just twenty segments? Is it not enough to know the fact? Children must not ask too many questions. It is the business of science to gather facts, not to seek for hidden implications. Such was the mental attitude into which men of science were quite commonly driven between 1830 and 1860, by their desire to blink the question of evolution. A feeling grew up that the true glory of a scientific

career was to detect for the two hundredth time an asteroid, or to stick a pin through a beetle with a label attached bearing your own latinized name, *Browni*, or *Jonesii*, or *Robinsoniense*. This feeling was especially strong in France, and was not confined to physical science. It was exhibited a few years later in the election of some Swedish or Norwegian naturalist (whose name I forget) to the French Academy of Sciences instead of Charles Darwin; the former had described some new kind of fly, the latter was only a theorizer! The study of origins in particular was to be frowned upon. The Linguistic Society of Paris in 1863 passed a by-law that no communications bearing upon the origin of language would be received. In the same mood Sir Henry Maine's treatise on Ancient Law was condemned at a leading American university; it was enough for us to know our own laws; those of India might interest British students who might have occasion to go there, but not Americans. Such crude notions, utterly hostile to the spirit of science, were unduly favored fifty years ago by the persistent unwillingness to submit the phenomena of organic nature to the kind of scientific explanation which facts from all quarters were urging upon us.

During the period from 1830 to 1860 the factor in evolution which had hitherto escaped detection was gradually laid hold of and elaborately studied by Charles Darwin. In the nature of his speculations, and the occasion that called them forth, he was a true disciple of Lyell. The work of that great geologist led directly up to Darwinism. As long as it was supposed that each geologic period was separated from the periods before and after it by Titanic convulsions which revolutionized the face of the globe, it was

possible for men to acquiesce in the supposition that these convulsions wrought an abrupt and wholesale destruction of organic life, and that the lost forms were replaced by an equally abrupt and wholesale supernatural creation of new forms at the beginning of each new period. But as people ceased to believe in the convulsions, such an explanation began to seem improbable, and it was completely discredited by the fact that many kinds of plants and animals have persisted with little or no change during several successive periods, side by side with other kinds in which there has been extensive variation and extinction.

In this connection a fact of immense significance was elicited. Between the fauna and flora of successive periods in the same geographical region there is apt to be a manifest family likeness, indicating that the later are connected with the earlier through the bonds of physical descent. It was a case of this sort that attracted Darwin's attention in 1835. The plants and animals of the Galapagos Islands are either descended, with specific modifications, from those of the main-land of Ecuador, or else there must have been an enormous number of special creations. The case is one which, at a glance, presents the notion of special creations in an absurd light. But what could have caused the modifications? What was wanted was to be able to point to some agency, similar to agencies now in operation and therefore intelligible, which could be proved to be capable of making specific changes in plants and animals. Darwin's solution of the problem was so beautiful, it seems now so natural and inevitable, that we may be in danger of forgetting how complicated and abstruse the problem

really was. Starting from the known experiences of breeders of domestic animals and cultivated plants, and duly considering the remarkable and sometimes astonishing changes that are wrought by simple selection, the problem was to detect among the multifarious phenomena of organic nature any agency capable of accomplishing what man thus accomplishes by selection. In detecting the agency of natural selection, working perpetually through the preservation of favored individuals and races in the struggle for existence, Darwin found the true cause for which men were waiting. With infinite patience and caution he applied his method of explanation to one group of organic phenomena after another, meeting in every quarter with fresh and often unexpected verification. After more than twenty years a singular circumstance led him to publish an account of his researches. The same group of facts had set a younger naturalist to work upon the same problem, and a similar process of thought had led to the same solution. Without knowing what Darwin had done, Alfred Russel Wallace made the same discovery, and sent from the East Indies, in 1858, his statement of it to Darwin as to the man whose judgment upon it he should most highly prize. This made publication necessary for Darwin. The vast treasures of theory and example which he had accumulated were given to the world, the notion of special creations was exploded, and the facts of phylogenetic evolution won general acceptance.

Under the influence of this great achievement men in every department of science began to work in a more philosophical spirit. Naturalists, abandoning the mood of the stamp-collector, saw in every nook and corner some fresh illustration of Darwin's views.

One serious obstacle to any general statement of the doctrine of Evolution was removed. It was in 1861 that Herbert Spencer began to publish such a general systematic statement. His point of departure was the point reached by Baer in 1829, the change from homogeneity to heterogeneity. The theory of evolution had already received in Spencer's hands a far more complete and philosophical treatment than ever before, when the discovery of natural selections came to supply the one feature which it lacked. Spencer's thought is often more profound than Darwin's, but he would be the first to admit the indispensableness of natural selection to the successful working out of his own theory.

The work of Spencer is beyond precedent for comprehensiveness and depth. He began by showing that as a generalization of embryology Baer's law needs important emendations, and he went on to prove that, as thus rectified, the law of the development of an ovum is the law which covers the evolution of our planetary system, and of life upon the earth's surface in all its myriad manifestations. In Spencer's hands, the time-honored Nebular Theory propounded by Immanuel Kant in 1755, the earliest of all scientific theories of evolution, took on fresh life and meaning; and at the same time the theories of Lamarck and Darwin as to organic evolution were worked up along with his own profound generalization of the evolution of mind into one coherent and majestic whole. Mankind have reason to be grateful that the promise of that daring prospectus which so charmed and dazzled us in 1860 is at last fulfilled; that after six-and-thirty years, despite all obstacles and discouragements, the Master's work is virtually done.

Such a synthesis could not have been achieved, nor even attempted, without the extraordinary expansion of molecular physics that marked the first half of the nineteenth century. When Priestley discovered oxygen, the undulatory theory of light, the basis of all modern physics, had not been established. It had indeed been propounded, as long ago as 1678, by the illustrious Christian Huyghens, whom we should also remember as the discoverer of Saturn's rings and the inventor of the pendulum clock. But Huyghens was in advance of his age, and the overshadowing authority of Newton, who maintained a rival hypothesis, prevented due attention being paid to the undulatory theory until the beginning of the present century, when it was again taken up and demonstrated by Fresnel and Thomas Young. About the same time, our fellow-countryman, Count Rumford, was taking the lead in that series of researches which culminated in the discovery of the mechanical equivalent of heat by Dr. Joule in 1843. One of Priestley's earliest books, the one which made him a doctor of laws and a fellow of the Royal Society, was a treatise on electricity, published in 1767. It was a long step from that book to the one in which the Danish physicist Oersted, in 1820, demonstrated the intimate correlation between electricity and magnetism, thus preparing the way for Faraday's great discovery of magneto-electric induction in 1831. By the middle of our century the work in these various departments of physics had led to the detection of the deepest truth in science, the law of correlation and conservation, which we owe chiefly to Helmholtz, Mayer and Grove. It was proved that light and heat and the manifestations of force which we group together under

the name of electricity are various modes of undulatory motion transformable one into another ; and that in the operations of Nature energy is never annihilated, but only changed from one form into another. This generalization includes the indestructibility of matter, and thus lies at the bottom of all chemistry and physics, and of all science.

Returning to that chemistry with which we started, we may recall two laws that were propounded early in the century, one of which was instantly adopted, while the other had to wait for its day. Dalton's law of definite and multiple proportion has been ever since 1808 the corner-stone of chemical science, and the atomic theory by which he sought to explain the law has exercised a profound influence upon all modern speculation. The other law, announced by Avogadro in 1811, that, "under the same conditions of pressure and temperature, equal volumes of all gaseous substances, whether elementary or compound, contain the same number of molecules," was neglected for nearly fifty years, and then, when it was taken up and applied, it remodeled the whole science of chemistry and threw a flood of light upon the internal constitution of matter. In this direction a new world of speculation is opening up before us, full of wondrous charm. The amazing progress made since Priestley's day may be summed up in a single contrast. In 1781 Cavendish ascertained the bare fact that water is made up of oxygen and hydrogen ; within ninety years from that time Sir William Thomson was able to tell us that "if the drop of water were magnified to the size of the earth, the constituent atoms would be larger than peas, but not so large as billiard balls." Such a statement is confessedly provisional, but allowing for this, the contrast is no less striking.

Concerning the various and complicated applications of physical science to the arts, by which human life has been so profoundly affected in the present century, a mere catalogue of them would tax our attention to little purpose. As my object in the present paper is simply to trace the broad outlines of advance in pure science, I pass over these applications, merely observing that the perpetual interaction between theory and practice is such that each new invention is liable to modify the science in which it originated, either by encountering fresh questions or by suggesting new methods, or in both these ways. The work of men like Pasteur and Koch cannot fail to influence biological theory as much as medical practice. The practical applications of electricity are introducing new features into the whole subject of molecular physics, and in this region I suspect we are to look for some of the most striking disclosures of the immediate future.

A word must be said of the historical sciences, which have witnessed as great changes as any others, mainly through the introduction of the comparative method of inquiry. The first two great triumphs of the comparative method were achieved contemporaneously in two fields of inquiry very remote from one another: the one was the work of Cuvier, above mentioned; the other was the founding of the comparative philology of the Aryan languages by Franz Bopp in 1816. The work of Bopp exerted as powerful an influence throughout all the historical fields of study as Cuvier exerted in biology. The young men whose minds were receiving their formative impulses between 1825 and 1840, under the various influences of Cuvier and Saint-Hilaire, Lyell, Goethe, Bopp, and other

such great leaders, began themselves to come to the foreground as leaders of thought about 1860: on the one hand, such men as Darwin, Gray, Huxley, and Wallace; on the other hand, such as Kuhn and Schleicher, Maine, Maurer, Mommsen, Freeman, and Tylor. The point of the comparative method, in whatever field it may be applied, is that it brings before us a great number of objects so nearly alike that we are bound to assume for them an origin and general history in common, while at the same time they present such differences in detail as to suggest that some have advanced further than others in the direction in which all are traveling; some, again, have been abruptly arrested, others perhaps even turned aside from the path. In the attempt to classify such phenomena, whether in the historical or in the physical sciences, the conception of development is presented to the student with irresistible force. In the case of the Aryan languages no one would think of doubting their descent from a common original: just side by side is the parallel case of one sub-group of the Aryan languages, namely, the seven Romance languages which we know to have been developed out of Latin since the Christian era. In these cases we can study the process of change resulting in forms that are more or less divergent from their originals. In one quarter a form is retained with little modification; in another it is completely blurred, as the Latin *metipsissimus* becomes *medesimo* in Italian, but *mismo* in Spanish, while in modern French there is nothing left of it but *meme*. So in Sanskrit and in Lithuanian we find a most ingenious and elaborate system of conjugation and declension, which in such languages as Greek and Latin is more or less curtailed and altered, and which

in English is almost completely lost. Yet in Old English there are quite enough vestiges of the system to enable us to identify it with the Lithuanian and Sanskrit.

So the student who applies the comparative method to the study of human customs and institutions is continually finding usages, beliefs, or laws existing in one part of the world that have long since ceased to exist in another part; yet where they have ceased to exist they have often left unmistakable traces of their former existence. In Australasia we find types of savagery ignorant of the bow and arrow; in aboriginal North America, a type of barbarism familiar with the art of pottery, but ignorant of domestic animals or of the use of metals; among the earliest Romans, a higher type of barbarism, familiar with iron and cattle, but ignorant of the alphabet. Along with such gradations in material culture we find associated gradations in ideas, in social structure, and in deep-seated customs. Thus, some kind of fetichism is apt to prevail in the lower stages of barbarism, and some form of polytheism in the higher stages. The units of composition in savage and barbarous societies are always the clan, the phratry, and the tribe. In the lower stages of barbarism we see such confederacies as those of the Iroquois; in the highest stage, at the dawn of civilization, we begin to find nations imperfectly formed by conquest without incorporation, like aboriginal Peru or ancient Assyria. In the lower stages we see captives tortured to death, then at a later stage sacrificed to the tutelary deities, then later on enslaved and compelled to till the soil. Through the earlier stages of culture, as in Australasia and aboriginal America, we find the marriage tie so loose, and paternity so uncertain that kinship is

reckoned only through the mother. But in the highest stage of barbarism, as among the earliest Greeks, Romans, and Jews, the more definite patriarchal family is developed, and kinship begins to be reckoned through the father. It is only after that stage is reached that inheritance of property becomes fully developed, with the substitution of individual ownership for clan ownership, and so on to the development of testamentary succession, individual responsibility for delict and crime, and the substitution of contract for status. In all such instances—and countless others might be cited—we see the marks of an intelligible progression, a line of development which human ideas and institutions have followed. But in the most advanced societies we find numerous traces of such states of things as now exist only among savage or barbarous societies. Our own ancestors were once polytheists, with plenty of traces of fetichism. They were organized in clans, phratries, and tribes. There was a time when they used none but stone tools and weapons; when there was no private property in land, and no political structure higher than the tribe. Among the forefathers of the present civilized inhabitants of Europe are unmistakable traces of human sacrifices and of the reckoning of kinship through the mother only. When we have come to survey large groups of facts of this sort, the conclusion is irresistibly driven home to us that the more advanced societies have gone through various stages now represented here and there by less advanced societies; that there is a general path of social development, along which, owing to special circumstances, some peoples have advanced a great way, some a less way, some but a very little way; and that, by studying existing savages and barbarians, we get a valuable

clue to the interpretation of prehistoric times. All these things are to-day commonplaces among students of history and archæology ; sixty years ago they would have been scouted as idle vagaries. It is the introduction of such methods of study that is making history scientific. It is enabling us to digest the huge masses of facts that are daily poured in upon us by decipherers of the past,—monuments, inscriptions, pottery, weapons, ethnological reports, and all that sort of thing,—and to make all contribute toward a coherent theory of the career of mankind upon the earth.

In the course of the foregoing survey, one fact stands out with especial prominence : it appears that about half a century ago the foremost minds of the world, with whatever group of phenomena they were occupied, had fallen, and were more and more falling, into a habit of regarding things not as having originated in the shape in which we now find them, but as having been slowly metamorphosed from some other shape through the agency of forces similar in nature to forces now at work. Whether planets, or mountains, or mollusks, or subjunctive moods, or tribal confederacies were the things studied, the scholars who studied them most deeply and most fruitfully were those who studied them as phases in a process of development. The work of such scholars has formed the strong current of thought in our time, while the work of those who did not catch these new methods has been dropped by the way and forgotten. And as we look back to Newton's time we can see that ever since then the drift of scientific thought has been setting in this direction, and with increasing steadiness and force.

Now, what does all this drift of scientific opinion during more than two centuries mean? It can, of

course, have but one meaning. It means that the world *is* in a process of development, and that gradually, as advancing knowledge has enabled us to take a sufficiently wide view of the world, we have come to see that it is so. The old statical conception of a world created all at once in its present shape was the result of very narrow experience; it was entertained when we knew only an extremely small segment of the world. Now that our experience has widened, it is outgrown and set aside forever; it is replaced by the dynamical conception of a world in a perpetual process of evolution from one state into another state. This dynamical conception has come to stay with us. Our theories as to what the process of evolution is may be more or less wrong and are confessedly tentative, as scientific theories should be. But the dynamical conception, which is not the work of any one man, be he Darwin or Spencer or any one else, but the result of the cumulative experience of the last two centuries, this is a permanent acquisition. We can no more revert to the statical conception than we can turn back the sun in his course. Whatever else the philosophy of future generations may be, it must be some kind of a philosophy of evolution.

Such is the scientific conquest achieved by the nineteenth century, a marvelous story without any parallel in the history of human achievement. The swiftness of the advance has been due partly to the removal of the ancient legal and social trammels that beset free thinking in every conceivable direction. It is largely due also to the use of correct methods of research. The waste of intellectual effort has been less than in former ages. The substitution of Lavoisier's balance for Stahl's *a priori* reasoning is one among

countless instances of this. Sound scientific method is a slow acquisition of the human mind, and for its more rapid introduction, in Priestley's time and since, we have largely to thank the example set by those giants of a former age, Galileo and Kepler, Descartes and Newton.

The lessons that might be derived from our story are many. But one that we may especially emphasize is the dignity of Man whose persistent seeking for truth is rewarded by such fruits. We may be sure that the creature whose intelligence measures the pulsations of molecules and unravels the secret of the whirling nebula is no creature of a day, but the child of the universe, the heir of all the ages, in whose making and perfecting is to be found the consummation of God's creative work.

